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Maha Shivaratri

By Uma Raman

SHIVARATRI, or the night of Shiva, is a festival that is celebrated by most Hindus. It is believed that on this day Lord Shiva appears in the form of a Jyotirlinga. Those who celebrate this festival are Shaivites or the worshippers of Lord Shiva.

This festival falls in the month of Magha according to the Hindu calendar, or the month of January or February according to the English calendar. This year, Maha Shivaratri happens to be on a Sunday (February 25th).

In celebrating this festival, people fast, keep awake throughout the night, and worship the idol of Lord Shiva. Lotus flowers and leaves from the Bilwa tree are used for worship. The Bilwa leaf has three parts attached to one stem. They are said to represent Lord Shiva's eyes which are three in number.

There are many stories about why Shivaratri is celebrated. One story is of a hunter who went into the forest to hunt. He killed so many birds that he could not collect them all by nightfall. So he decided to spend the night in the forest.

The hunter tried to sleep on top of a tree. But he could not do so because of the cold. In his attempts to keep warm he shook the tree. The leaves and flowers of the tree fell on to a 'linga' which was there at the foot of the tree. But the hunter did not know this. Thus, he had worshipped Lord Shiva without really knowing it. This act brought him good fortune.

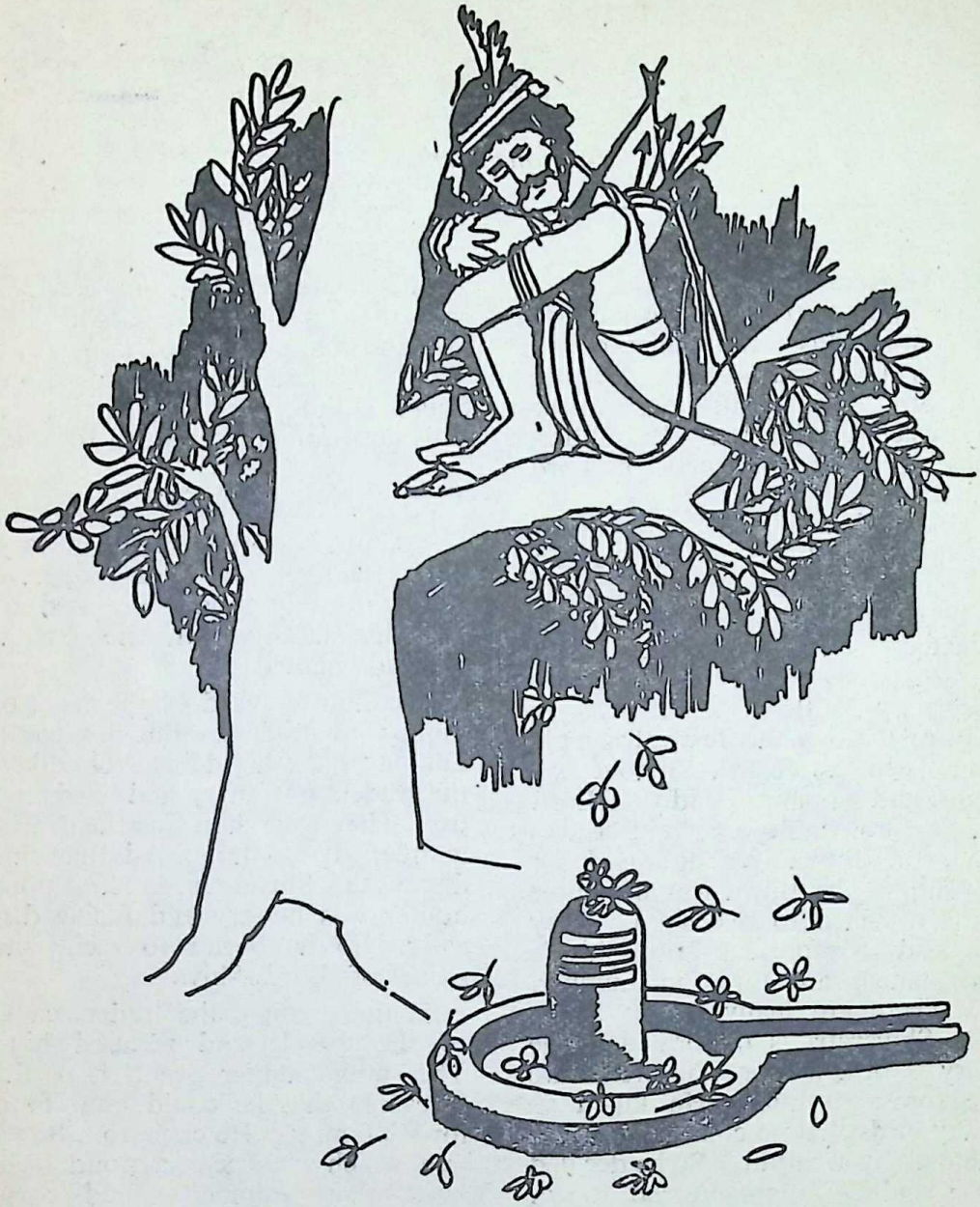
THE POOR HUNTER

Another story is about a very poor hunter, who did not have money to buy food. He used to feed his family with the animal he had hunted.

The hunter owed large sums of money to traders. But he could not pay back his debts. One day, the traders got angry and tied him up. They put him in the Shiva temple. It so happened that this day was Shivaratri. The poor hunter was hungry and facing disaster. So he began to recite the name of Lord Shiva.

In the evening, the traders came to the temple and released him. The poor hunter went into the forest so that he could hunt food for his family. He came to a Bilwa tree which was near a pond. He knew that animals would come to the pond to drink water. So he climbed up the tree and waited.

It so happened that unknown to the hunter a Shiva linga was there just below the tree. Soon some



deer came to drink water at the pond. The hunter could not see them properly because the leaves were in his way. So he started plucking the leaves and dropped them unknowingly on the Shiva linga. When he did this, the deer realised that there was a man on the tree who wanted to kill them, and they ran away.

Early next morning, some deer came again. When the hunter tried to kill them, they spoke. They said "please do not kill us now. We just want to drink some water and go home. We have children who are hungry and have to be fed. Otherwise they will die. Be kind, O hunter and let us go. We will feed our children and come back. Then you can kill us."

The hunter was astonished. He had never before heard animals speaking. Therefore he allowed them to go. After some time, the deer came back and brought their young ones along. The deer said, "We have fed our children, O hunter! Now you can kill us."

Hearing this, the young ones cried, "No , no, do not kill them. Kill us. We do not want them to die." Soon there was an argument between the deer. The hunter, seeing the love between the animals, realised his mistake.

Full of sorrow, the hunter said "I shall not kill any of you. I have been a very bad man. It was my mistake. Please go home. I shall never kill any animal in my life again." So saying, he took his bow and arrow, broke them into bits and threw them away.

In this story, the different aspects of worship were observed by the hunter. He had fasted all day, recited the name of Lord Shiva, and stayed awake all night, unconsciously worshipping Lord Shiva, by dropping the Bilwa leaves on the Shiva linga. The hunter therefore obtained Moksha or salvation.

THE STARVING TIGER

Yet another story is about a poor brahmin who was very interested in hunting. One day the brahmin went hunting but could not find any game. He scouted all day but could find nothing. Since he had not eaten all day, he was very hungry. Therefore he stayed in the forest in order to get food.

Wandering through the forest late at night, he spotted a tiger. Before he could kill it, the tiger charged at him. The brahmin, in fright, dropped everything and ran. The tiger began chasing him. The brahmin hid in a thicket of mango trees. He climbed up one of the trees so that the tiger could not get him.

The tiger followed and sat at the foot of the tree, waiting for the brahmin to come down. The brahmin, on top of the tree could not see the tiger. So he began to pluck the mango blossoms and dropped them down.

Unknown to the brahmin, there was a Shiva linga at the foot of the tree. The mango blossoms that the brahmin plucked fell on the Shiva linga.

Towards the beginning of dawn, the brahmin, who had stayed awake all night and was hungry, thought that if he stayed up on the tree much longer, he would die. So he decided to offer himself as a meal to the tiger. He thought it would be a noble deed and he would earn the merit of God.

The brahmin climbed down from the tree and stood before the tiger. He said, "you have fasted

all day and night and remained awake. O tiger, break your fast and eat me."

The tiger, having spent the whole night near the Shiva linga without knowing it, was now a changed personality. It felt pity for the poor brahmin, and said "I shall not kill and eat you. You too have fasted and remained awake. You can go home."

Thus indirectly, both the tiger and the brahmin had observed Shivaratri, as a result of which they both obtained Moksha.

THE INNOCENT THIEF

In South India, apparently, a different version is believed. A young brahmin used to do evil deeds. He was so bad that one day he got banished from the kingdom. The young brahmin wandered about with nothing to eat and no place to go.

In the evening, he wandered into a Shiva temple. Near the image of Lord Shiva, there were many food offerings. The light was dim and the young brahmin could not see what the offerings were.

Near the offerings was a small oil lamp which had a very low flame. The brahmin, in order to see better, bent and tried to push the wick of the lamp up, so that the flame would become brighter. As he was doing so, the temple keeper came and saw him. He thought the young brahmin was a thief and shouted, "Thief, thief."

Soon people gathered. They chased the brahmin and caught him. Then they began to beat him. The poor brahmin, who was hungry and tired because of his wandering was too weak to take the punishment, as a result of which he died.

But, before he died, the young brahmin had performed, in a way, the act of fasting and the act of worship by increasing the flame of the lamp. In so doing, he had done service to Lord Shiva and thus obtained Moksha.

There are many more stories that people believe. All of them cannot be related here. Although there are so many stories in connection with Maha Shivaratri, nobody is able to tell which is the correct story.

Sympathy is the key that fits the lock of any heart

Vijay Corporation

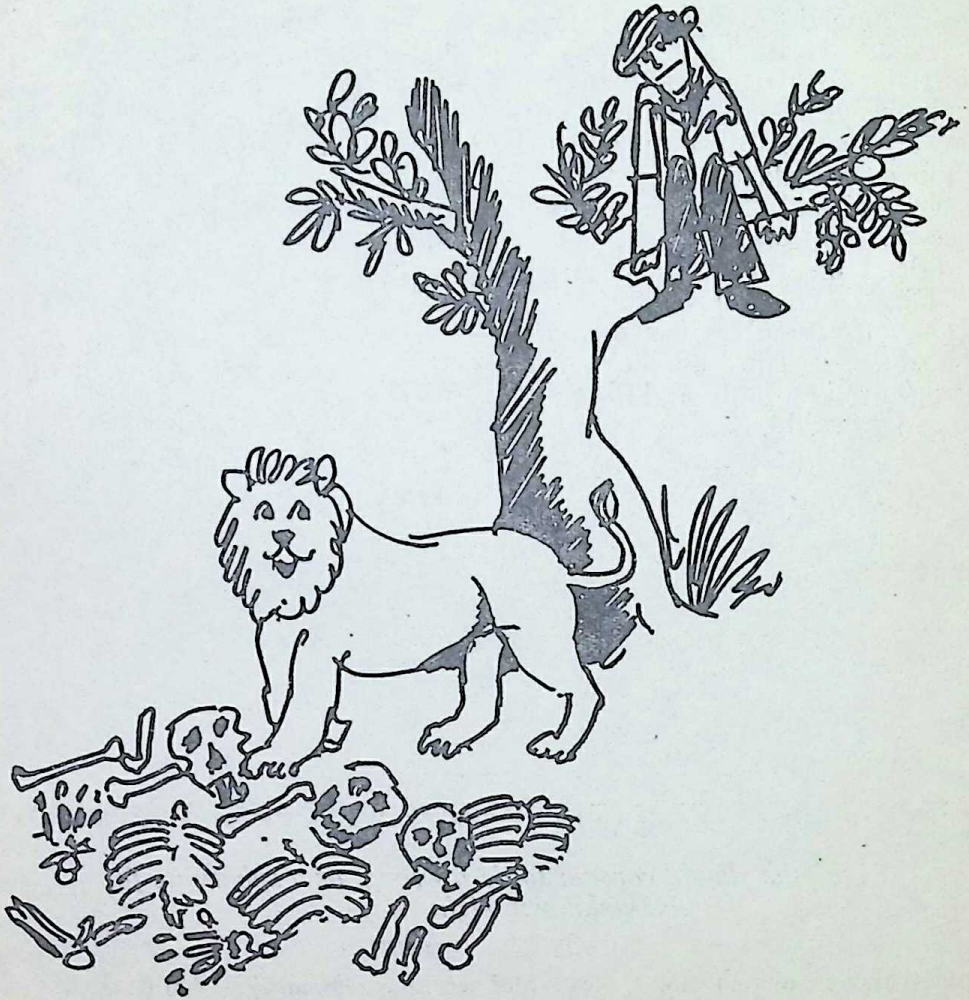
2nd Floor, Ideal Industrial Estate, Tulsipipe Road,
Lower Parel, Bombay - 400 013.

THE WISE ONE

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

A long time ago in a certain town there lived four friends. Three of them were men of great learning. The fourth was a simple person. He was not as clever as his friends, yet he had a lot of common sense.

One day, one of the scholars told his friends, "What's the use of having unusual talents if we do not benefit from them ?" He added "Let's all travel, win the favour of kings and make a lot of money." The others readily agreed.



As they were setting out on their travels, the eldest of them said " We have amongst us one who is not so bright. He will not impress the noblemen we will meet. Then why should we share our wealth with him ? " The second nodded his head " Sorry, my friend. You've no skill. You go home ". " No, No, " burst out the third. " This is no way to treat a friend. We all have played together since we were little boys. Come along dost, you too shall share what we earn. "

Thus the four men set forth on their journey. Soon they came to a forest. In the forest they found the bones of a dead lion. One of the scholars said " This is a good chance to test our talents. Here lies a dead creature. Let's bring it to life. " The eldest stated " I know how to assemble the skeleton." And he did so. The second claimed, " I'll supply skin, flesh, and blood. " This too was done.

" I can give it life," said the third proudly. While he was intent upon breathing life into the animal, the fourth man advised him against it, remarking, " Friend, this is a lion. If you bring him to life, he will kill all of us. "

" You simpleton, " was the reply. " Do you want me to reduce my learning to nothing ? Not I ! Not I ! " Shaking with fright, the simple fellow replied, " In that case, wait a moment till I climb a tree. "

The wise man went up the tree and the clever one continued with his task. He too succeeded. But no sooner the lion was brought to life, he pounced on the three scholars and ate them up. When the lion moved away, the sensible man came down from the tree and went home.

By Lalogue Postvala

No man should consent to do a wrong, as a substitute for an unknown right way-

Jolly & Maker

Maker Bhavan No. 2, New Marine Lines, Bombay - 400 020.

THE TEST OF SKILL

By *Worli Bal Vihar*

ONCE upon a time there lived a pretty girl called Arachne, who wove the most marvellous pictures with her loom and her needle. She sat all day, spinning beautiful colours, making them into pictures of men, women, children, and animals. Everyone came to see her make pictures, for Arachne was famous.

But she was very proud. She loved to be praised and was only happy when people marvelled at her skill. She loved to have a crowd around her, watching her weave swiftly.

" Arachne makes such beautiful pictures that surely the great Goddess Minerva must have taught her, " said a woman who was looking on.

Such a speech would have pleased anyone but Arachne, for Minerva was famous for her wonderful work. But the proud girl flew into a temper and frowned.

" Do you suppose that Minerva could teach me anything ? " she cried. " No, no, it is the other way round. If Minerva came to me, I could teach her to sew better ! "

Now this was a foolish thing to say, for Minerva was told what Arachne had said. She made up her mind to go to the girl and advise her not to speak so proudly. She put a cloak around her so that she seemed to be a poor old woman. Soon she was standing by Arachne's side with the other watchers.

" Now see this new picture I am making, " said the proud girl. " Not even Minerva could do this ! " Minerva frowned. " Have a care, maiden ", she said, " Minerva may punish you ".

Arachne turned rudely on the old woman. " Hold your tongue, dame ", she said. " I am no daughter or hand-maid of yours for you to advise ! " At this Minerva got angry. She threw off her cloak and stood before everyone in her magnificent beauty. They all fell on their knees-except Arachne who still sat defiantly at her loom.

" And now Arachne ", said Minerva sternly, " you shall have your wish. You and I will match our skill against each other. I will weave a picture upon one loom and you shall weave a picture upon another. "

Minerva began to work at her picture in silence and Arachne too set to work, eager to prove that she could make a finer picture than the Goddess.

Minerva made a picture of the Gods and showed how they punished

men and women who were foolish or wicked while Arachne made a picture of the Gods doing stupid and wicked things.

The two pictures were finished and Arachne saw at once that Minerva's picture was far more wonderful than hers-it was so beautifully woven that the Gods seemed alive.

When Minerva saw Arachne's picture, she was angry. She tore it up and turned to Arachne. She struck her angrily. In a trice, the maiden shrivelled up. She became very small ; her hair fell off ; her fingers turned into legs. She was nothing but a spider.

She ran into a corner and hid herself. After a while she began to spin a web, for the Goddess had not taken the gift of weaving from her. And to this day Arachne's children, the great spider family, can spin the most beautiful webs.

The Wolf in Sheep's Clothing

By Sowjanya & Sailaja Manacha

IN the grasslands of Pampas in Australia, there once lived a gaucho (shepherd) who was very poor and earned his living by looking after the Merino sheep. One day as the sheep were grazing and the gaucho was resting under a tree, a wolf happened to pass by.

His mouth watered at the sight of the plump sheep. He made up his mind to catch hold of one for his supper. He waited for a suitable occasion. When the gaucho fell asleep he pounced on it and had a good feast.

After one plump sheep, the wolf was not satisfied. The gaucho was slowly rolling and trying to get up. Suddenly an idea flashed like lightening through the wolf's mind. He put on the skin of the Merino sheep he had eaten before and mingled with the flock.

When he heard the sheep bleat, he tried to do the same. But instead of bleating, he howled. The gaucho woke up with a start and had no difficulty in spotting out the wolf from the flock. He caught hold of the wolf and killed it. He returned home with one sheep less but the master did not shout at him as he had done a good deed for the day.

THE MYSTERY OF EDEN PARK

By *Narayan Bhatt* (14 years)

"OH, Jack, here come Lucy and her mother up the drive," said Tessa. " Peter's coming back today ", said Lucy, as she reached them. "We have come to ask whether you could come to the station to meet Peter " said Lucy's mother.

All of them went to the station. The train drew in; people leapt out. " There is Peter. Look! " Lucy cried. Peter had to answer many questions. " Come down to my shed tomorrow at 10 a.m. " Peter told Jack. Jack and Tessa then went home.

Jack, Tessa, Peter and Lucy were four good friends. They enjoyed their holidays playing in Peter's shed. Peter was in a boarding school while the other three went to a school near their house. The next day the four met at Peter's shed. They started discussing how to spend the holidays. Peter suggested that they should go to the park nearby. All the three agreed.

So in the evening the four went to Eden park. They played some games. Lucy and Tessa were tired. But the boys were not, so they decided to explore the park. They came to a shed. It was locked, but a man with a gun in hand was guarding it. " What's in the shed ? " Peter asked the guard.

" It's none of your business " said the guard angrily. The two boys slowly slipped out of the guard's view and hid behind a bush. After a few minutes the guard, with a quick glance, made sure that nobody was about. He did not know that the two boys were spying on him. He took out something from his pocket and pressed a switch which was on it.

" Sir, some boys here, asked me about this shed. Shall I catch them?", asked the guard. "No, Tom don't worry. They must have been curious children ", said a voice. " Okay, Tom. Come here on Tuesday 9 p.m. sharp ". Peter and Jack had heard every word of this conversation. They repeated it to the girls. They decided to come to the shed on Tuesday at 7.45 p.m. sharp.

On Tuesday, at a quarter to eight, the two boys were hiding behind the bush near the shed in the park which was owned by Bill Eden. " Here comes Bill with the guard ", said Jack. The guard came and opened the door. " Tom you can go home now. Come tomorrow at 6 a.m. sharp, " said Bill. Then they went away.

Peter and Jack became curious. They switched on their torches and entered the shed. Peter saw that they were standing on a metal floor. On one of the walls of the shed, he saw a switch and a red bulb near it.

Suddenly a car with two men in it, came in. The boys rushed to a dark corner. The driver got down and pressed the switch on the wall. Then he again got into the

car. After a few seconds the floor slid downwards with the car and the two boys on it.

After they reached the bottom, the driver switched on the head lights. The two boys were thus caught. The car went through the long tunnel and stopped in a big workshop. Some men were repainting and changing the number plates of cars and lorries. In one corner there were steps leading upwards. Jack and Peter were taken upstairs and locked in a room. "At last Peter, we have hit upon a real mystery!" said Jack.

"I think this is a receiving place for stolen cars. They are brought here in the dark, put on the moving floor; taken down here and completely altered so that nobody ever recognises them", said Peter.

"I saw Bill ordering some men about in the other corner. I think", said Jack, "Bill keeps that park of his as a nice cover for himself."

"Jack you wait here, I will escape and bring the police", said Peter. "They will suspect that we have escaped if we both go". "But how will you get out ?" asked Jack. "You just wait and see," said Peter.

Peter took out a newspaper from his pocket and put it under the door, half his side and half the other side of the door. Then he took a wire and pushed it into the lock. The key on the other side fell on the newspaper. Then he pulled the paper back carefully and opened the door with the key. That was easy.

Then he crept down the spiral stairway after gently locking the door. He hid in a corner. A big lorry suddenly backed almost into the stairway. Then an idea came to Peter. He climbed quietly into the back of the lorry. He covered himself with some old papers and sacks which were in the lorry.

The lorry went along the passage, and stopped on the movable floor. A minute's wait and the floor went up like a lift.

The lorry went through the park and waited at the gate for the guard to open it. In that minute's wait, Peter slipped out of the lorry. When the guard was busy opening the big gate, he slipped out of a side gate and reached home. He telephoned the inspector and after a few minutes, six police cars with Peter in one went to the park. At the gates, they caught the guard. At the shed, they pressed the button, and the cars went in. But Peter waited outside with the inspector in his car.

The raid was a complete and utter surprise. Every man down below in the workshop was rounded up-and Bill was discovered asleep in one of the bedrooms near Jack's.

Jack was glad to see Peter, when he was led to the car by one of the policemen. Then the inspector's car moved off, with the others following in a close line.

"A very good haul, Peter" said the inspector. "A neat little mystery, and a neat ending. Thanks very much."

Kawa-The Clever Camel

By Sharad Shiroor (10 years)

KAWA, the camel, trotted along the road with his master Salim sitting on his back. They were going to the Sheikh's palace. When they reached the palace, Salim got down and tapped on the door with his stick. The door was opened by Ali Fasel who was the Sheikh's nephew. Now Ali was jealous of Salim as the Sheikh liked him so much.

"What do you want?" he asked angrily. "I want to meet the Sheikh", said Salim, and pushed his way inside. "Your Majesty," he said with a bow, "I would like to enter the camel race with Kawa". "Yes, you may", said the Sheikh.

With a loud "whoopee !" Salim jumped on Kawa's back and they began their journey to the place where the camel race was to be held. Ali had a mean mind and now he began to think very hard. How was it possible for him to trick Salim ? He quietly followed him.

Salim carried a big black bag of water on his journey as it was very hot in the desert. While Salim was asleep, Ali pricked the bag and made a big hole so that all the water began to come out. Kawa was a very clever camel. He knew something was wrong. He kicked Ali on the face. "AGGGH" said Ali and fell down. His face was full of blood. All this noise woke up Salim.

Ali reported to the Sheikh. The Sheikh was very angry. "How dare you hurt my nephew?" he shouted. Salim had already understood the mean trick Ali had played on him, but he did not say anything. "I am sorry your Majesty," he said in a low voice, "please punish me". Ali whispered in his Uncle's ear. The Sheikh said, "You will have to go to prison, or you will have to give Ali your camel."

Salim gave Kawa to Ali. Ali was very happy. He jumped on Kawa's back. But Kawa was angry and rolled on the ground so that Ali fell down. "You stupid camel!" cried Ali, "I will show you". He took out his whip and began to beat the camel. Kawa ran off in search of his master Salim.

Salim was sitting on the side of a hill. When he saw blood on Kawa's back, he cried, and put some paste on it. Kawa sniffed and began to make funny noises. "What is the matter, Kawa?" asked Salim.

Kawa began to run up the hill. Salim followed him. They stopped as they heard voices.. They were very surprised to see a lot of camels in a cave. Salim went closer to hear what they were saying. To his surprise, he saw Ali standing there. A big man hit Ali, "Stupid boy! Why did you let the camel run away from you ? We could have made so much money on him."

Salim understood that Ali was helping some robbers to kidnap camels and sell them. He jumped on Kawa and they raced towards the Sheikh's palace. The Sheikh was very upset to hear that his nephew was doing such bad things. He ordered his guards to bring Ali to him. "Put him in prison!" he told his guards.

The next day, Salim entered the camel race with Kawa. The man shouted, "1-2....." and 'bang!' went the gun! The race started. Kawa ran and ran. There was a lot of excitement. "Run Kawa, run!" cried a loud voice. It was the Sheikh! Kawa came first in the race and the Sheikh gave him a gold medal. Salim was the happiest boy in the world.

THE SACRIFICE

RAM and Radha were a happy couple. They lived in a small house. They were poor yet they were happy and they loved each other.

It was New Year's Eve and Radha wanted to give some present to Ram. Ram too wanted to give her a small gift. But what could they do without money? Ram had a lovely watch but the worn-out strap always made it look old. He always wished that he had a lovely gold strap. Radha had an idea. She sold her lovely gold chain. Though she shed a few tears before selling it, she was happy that Ram would be pleased with the strap.

On New Year's day, when Ram got up and had his morning tea, she smiled at him. When she showed him the strap and told him that it was for his watch, Ram seemed dismayed. Radha was surprised. There was silence as Ram said "Radha, I cannot wear this strap because I have sold the watch to buy you a locket for the chain". There were tears of joy in their eyes. Their faces beamed with the pleasure, which can be gained only by selfless sacrifice.

By Prabha (16 years)

CAUGHT RED-HANDED

By *V. L. Srinivasan* (13 years)

THE school-bell rang. All the boys and girls, who were playing, went into their class rooms with a sigh. Within a few minutes, the whole school was quiet.

In the silence, a great excitement arose in the sixth standard. Everybody was murmering and whispering. The class teacher, Mr. Ravi was shouting at the children.

The reason for the confusion in the class was Mohan's bag. It was not found in his place, nor anywhere in the class. Who had stolen his bag ?

Mr. Ravi looked angry. He looked at every boy and girl closely. Could it be Ramu?..... No, he was a very innocent boy. Was it Suresh ? No, no, he was a very rich boy. He looked at Gopal next, then Hari, Krishna, Mahesh ..... No, they could not have taken it. Then his eyes passed onto the girls' rows. Could any one of them have actually taken it ? No, no ..... But still, one never knew. His eyes turned past Lakshmi, Sunita, Usha, Sundari..... No, they could definitely not have taken it.

Then suddenly, Mr. Ravi's eyes passed onto Sunil in the last bench. He could have taken it. Mr. Ravi eyed Sunil with suspicion. Sunil, who was feeling uneasy, tried to look in another direction. Mr. Ravi said calmly " Look here, children, if anyone of you have taken Mohan's bag, even as a joke, please return it. I will not do anything if you return the bag. But if I find you lying, I shall have to punish you severely. " No sound from the children.

Mr. Ravi got annoyed. "It is all right, I shall take care and see that the thief is caught and punished."

Next day, all the children were anxiously waiting for Mr. Ravi, for he had told them that he would punish the thief in front of the whole class that day. Their anxiety increased even more when Mr. Ravi arrived with another man. He announced. " Look here children, today, I have brought Mr. Menon to our class. He is a magician. He will catch the thief within no time. So please return the bag to Mohan and apologize to him. " But no one spoke out

Then Mr. Menon spoke " Boys and girls, today I will do a trick by which the thief will be found out. In the room next to this class, there is a table. On the table, there is a handkerchief. All of you should go and touch the handkerchief and come back. If the kerchief turns pink, then the person who touches it is the thief. There shall be no one in the room. Now, you go to the room, one by one."

The excitement made the children shiver. Sunil seemed to be frighten-

ed. His face was as red as a tomato. Even then he tried to cover up with a smile. All the boys were made to stand in a queue. One by one they went into the room and returned. Then, it was Sunil's turn! He went inside and came back with the same red face. But nothing unusual happened. The handker chief remained white.

THE THIEF

Now, everybody in the class was wearing a surprised look. There was whispering everywhere. All were silent when Menon and the class teacher entered the class room. Mr. Ravi said " All of you, stay where you are, Mr. Menon will come and examine your hands. "

Mr. Menon went around the class and sniffed everybody's hands. Boy by boy, row by row he went on. He came near Sunil. He smelt Sunil's hands. He looked at him doubtfully. He sniffed his hands again. Then he took hold of Sunil's hands and led him to the teacher and declared that he was the thief. Mr. Ravi scolded and caned him in front of the whole class. He said, " Return Mohan's bag immediately. And promise me that you will not do such a thing hereafter. If you continue, I shall punish you even more severely. "

Sunil bent his head with shame. He brought Mohan's bag and returned it, apologizing to him. But one question worried him. Not only him but the whole class. How did Mr. Menon do it ? No one knew how he managed to catch Sunil. Even Mr. Ravi did not know. When Mr. Menon entered the room Mr. Ravi asked, " How did you know that Sunil was the thief ? The handkerchief did not turn pink. "

Mr. Menon laughed at this and said, " Oh, oh, the handkerchief will never become pink. It was only a little trick, you see. I put scent on the kerchief. So when anyone touched the kerchief his hand became scented. But Sunil never touched it out of fear. He was afraid that if he touched it, it would become pink and he would be caught. So his hand does not smell of perfume. "

Everybody in the class looked at him admiringly. Mr. Ravi thanked him very much for his help. And then, Mohan came and thanked him. When he had gone out of the class, Sunil went upto Mr. Ravi, apologized and promised him that he would never rob agair.

If information is used for the good of mankind, it makes a better man out of one; but if used for selfish ends, it destroys us.

International Chemicals

Dadabhai Phalkey Road, Dadar, Bombay - 400 014.

FIGHT TO THE FINISH

ONE day the parts of the body got together to talk about their work. The talk turned into a quarrel. Each one said, "I do the most important work in the body. So I am the most important part of the body."

The hand said, "My work is the most important. I take food to the mouth. You will get no food without me. People can't even grow food without my help. So I am more important than all of you."

"No," said the leg, "you aren't. I carry the body. You can't go out to grow food without my help. So I am the strongest and the most important part of the body."

At this the face laughed and said, "We faces are more important than hands or legs. A man sees everything with his eyes. He can hear nothing without the help of his ears, and without his nose he can't smell anything; and all these belong to me. So I am the most useful and important part of the body. I am also the most beautiful part of the body. What will a man look like without me?"

At this the stomach shouted, "I am the most important part of the body, I tell you. You, legs, are stronger than me and you, hands, are cleverer; and you are the most beautiful part of the body , Mr. Face. But still, I am the most important part."

"Why do you say so"? the other parts asked him. But the stomach said nothing in reply.

The other parts of the body were very angry. They cried , "you lazy stomach; you do not work. We are ashamed of you. We carry you about. You only eat and do nothing else. You are the laziest among us all. What do you say to all this? Say something, say something about your work. We shall listen to you."

But still the stomach did not say anything. Then the face said, "The stomach is of no use to the body. It only eats and drinks. From now on, we shall not give it any food. The hands and legs agreed to this idea and did not give any more food to the stomach. "Let it suffer and learn from its suffering," they said.

The days went by. The stomach did not get any food. It grew weaker and weaker and weaker. The other parts of the body also grew weaker and weaker. The hands and legs became thinner and thinner. They were now unable to do any work. The face also suffered. At last the body became ill. Then the parts of the body saw their mistake. They said to each other, "We were foolish. The body can't live without the help of the stomach. It can perhaps live without hands, eyes, or ears. But it can't live without the help of the stomach. So let us give it food."

And so the quarrel ended.

By *K. V. Nagasunder*
(15 years)

Smart Alec

Nit : I haven't slept for ten days.
Wit : Aren't you tired?
Nit : No, I sleep nights.

* * *

Teacher : Give me a sentence useing the word 'politics'.
Pupil : The parrot Polly swallowed a clock and now 'Polly ticks.'

* * *

Pete : My father has Washington's shoe. Ted : That's nothing, my father has Adam's apple !

* * *

Husband : (proudly) Don't you think our son gets his intelligence from me?
Wife : (calmly) Maybe, because I still have mine!

By Beni Vij (15 years)

* * *

He : If you give me your phone number, I will call you up sometime.
She : It is in the directory.
He : Fine. What is your name?
She : That is in the directory too.

By Bajaj Darshan Kumar (11 years)

* * *

Mother : What are you looking for?
Small son : Nothing, mummy!
Mother : You'll find it in the box where the chocolalates were.

Three slightly deaf men were motoring from the north to London in an old noisy car and hearing was difficult. As they were nearing the city, one asked "Is this Wembley?"
"No", replied the second, "this is Thursday".
"So am I", put in the third "Let's stop and have a drink".

* * *

Joe : I had a fight with the electric company.
Sam: Who won?
Joe : It was a draw. I do not get the light and they do not get the money.

By Sunil Wariar (14 years)

FUN WITH WORDS

By P. Sai Subramanyam (14 years)

How many blanks can you fill in?

1) .....ATE; Movable barrier closing an opening in a fence or wall.
2) .....ATE: Dislike.
3) .....ATE: Destiny.
4) .....ATE: Sea robber.
5) .....ATE: Leave unoccupied.
5) .....ATE: Make angry.
7) .....ATE: Soft or tender.
8) .....ATE: Rejoice.

Answers on page no. 26

DO YOU KNOW?

WE take the head as the most important thing. But it isn't so in zoology. Do you know that the snake is deaf? It does not even hear the flute of the proverbial snake-charmer. The dog, on the other hand, has such a fine sense of hearing that it would hear its own fleas cough—if only they could. Fish sometimes hear with the air-bladder located in their belly. And grasshoppers have a ear under their knee.

As for the sense of smell: river crayfish smell with their hair, the common housefly detects sugar with its feet, the earthworm and the cuttlefish detect scents with their whole body. That wasps have a finer sense of smell than human beings is obvious to all who have seen them attracted to the cake that humans have with their tea in the garden.

And what about sight? The falcon detects a mouse on the move from a height of nearly 1,000 feet. The bat's eyes are underdeveloped yet it can pounce, in the dark, on a tiny meal offered at the point of a pin, for the bat possesses the secret of "radar".

The hare can look backward and forward without turning its head—and there is one type of worm that sees from the point of its tail.

By S. Perry

FUN WITH NUMBERS

1. Fill in the blanks :

a. 1, 5, 9, 13,—?
b. 2, 4, 8, 16, 32, 64, —?
c. 0, 4, 6, 10, 12, 16, 18, 22, 24, —?
d. A, C, D, F, G, I, J, —?

2. Pick the odd man out :
1. 2, 12, 123, 27, 4, 3, 19.
2. 2, 12, 24, 32, 72, 43.
3. A, B, C, D, F, G, H.
4. Running, walking, standing, kicking, bowling.

By Sarab Jeet Singh Baweja
(14 years)

Answers on page no. 32

A truth presented to different men is accepted or rejected by each according to the good or evil of his mind-

T. M. Industries

12 & 12A, A-Z Industrial Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Bombay-400 013.

RIDDLES

1. What starts with ' T ', is full of 'T' and ends with ' T '?
2. What is a volcano ?
3. If you throw a white cap in the Red sea, what does it become ?
4. What four letters of the alphabet frighten a thief ?
5. What is the difference between night and day ?
6. If a man crosses an ocean twice without taking a bath even once, what can he be called ?

By Beni Vij (15 years)

7. Who earns a living by driving away customers ?
8. How is it possible to throw a ball so that it will completely change its direction of travel and return to you without bouncing or colliding with any solid object ?

By Premananda Nayak

Answers on page no. 26

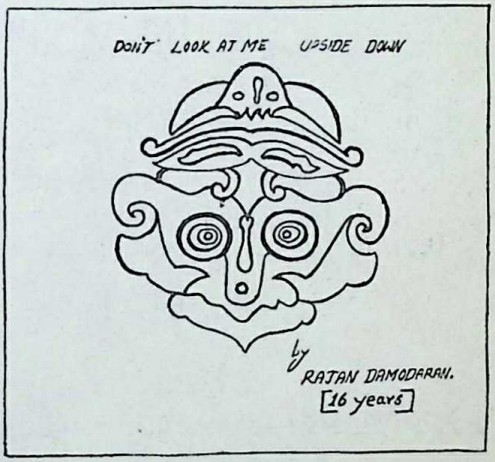
I'D LIKE TO .....

I'd like to catch the sunshine,
I'd like to sail the seas,
But bobby pins and pigtails say,
I'm not yet fit for these.

I'd like to ride the rainbow,
Paint pictures with great ease,
I'd like to end all sadness
And do anything I please.

I'd like to be a Creator,
And make the world anew,
But tell you what, God, if I may,
I'll leave such things to you.

By Depika Vidyarthi (10 years)



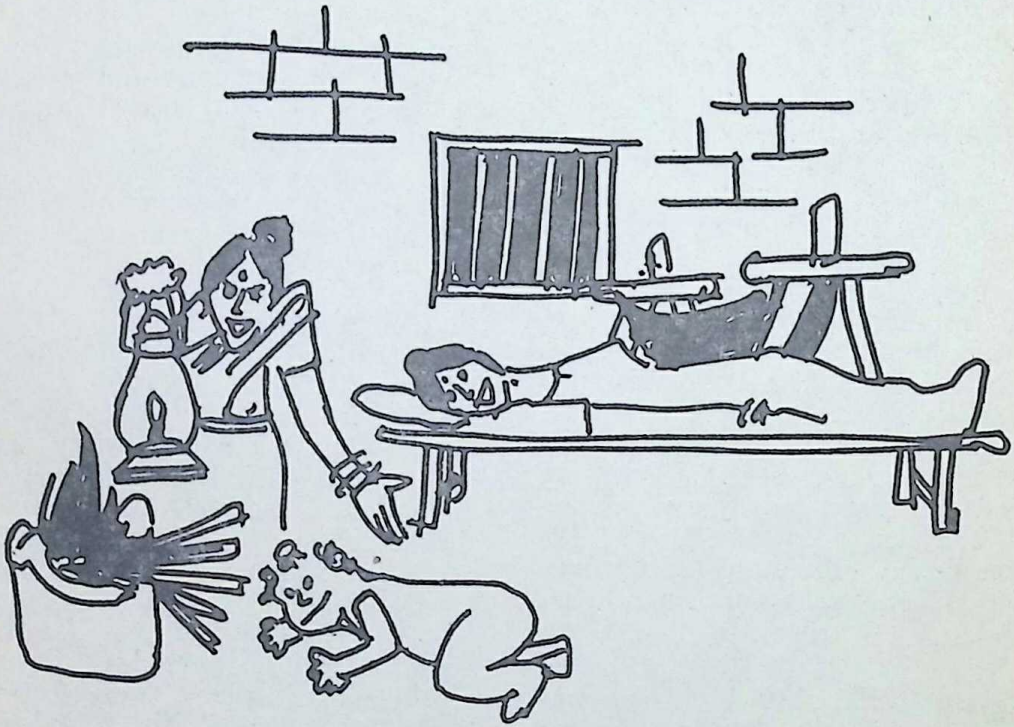
Success is the blessing of God on a good cause-
Shri Govindabhai K. Raja
68/F Napean Sea Road, Suvas Apartments, 4th Floor, Bombay–400 006.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Renuka Neogi

In the year 1836, was born one of the great Indian saints of modern times. His name was Sri Ramakrishna. He was born in an obscure village, Kamarpukur in Bengal. His parents were poor and humble brahmins who were devoted to God. His father Kshudiram was an honest soul and his mother Chandramani was simple and virtuous.



When they had gone on a pilgrimage to Varanasi and Gaya, the father had a strange dream. Lord Vishnu appeared and said he would be born as his son. At the same time, Chandramani also had a similar vision. The light from Shiva's image in the temple entered her body. They were both very happy. They already had two sons and a daughter.

In the early hours of the auspicious day of February 17, 1836, Sri Ramakrishna was born. Soon after his birth, he was not to be seen anywhere. The midwife Dhani with the help of an earthen lamp found the baby rolling in the ashes in the oven and he looked big enough to be a six month-old.

He was fondly called Gadadhar by his parents. He grew into a

lovely child, healthy, intelligent and happy. He attracted everyone by his charming ways. He would sit on his father's lap and hear stories of great men. He had a strong memory. He memorised many songs and could sing sweetly. He was gifted in other ways too: when he was older he could act, paint and clay model beautiful images of Gods and Goddesses. He was a friend of all the children and would share whatever he had with them. His father knew his son was not ordinary and would let him have his way and never scold him.

His father died suddenly when he was only eight. He missed him very much and became sober and thoughtful at this young age. He continued his schooling and with his friends, he would stage plays from the Mahabharata and the Ramayana. The leading role was always his as he would excel in it. Wandering monks used to visit his village and stay at the rest house. He loved their company and spent his time serving them. His young mind was impressed by their peaceful attitude. His mother was also pleased and wanted all the blessings of these holy men for her beloved child.

Even at an early age he would lose himself completely in thoughts of God and become unaware of his surroundings. His mother and other ladies mistook his ecstasy for a strange disease. When he returned to his normal self, he would console his mother.

A GREAT MIND

At eighteen, his eldest brother Ramkumar took him to Calcutta. He needed Gadai's help for running his Sanskrit school and he also wanted him to continue with his studies. But Gadai was quite reluctant and said "Brother, what shall I do with mere breadwinning education? I want the wisdom by which I can know the Highest Truth". His brother stood speechless and did not press him any further. He realized that formal education was of no use to this child who had a great mind and was born with full knowledge. Even learned pundits bowed down before him and paid heed to what he had to say. He set all their doubts at rest. Nobody knows how Gadai acquired the name of Ramakrishna, maybe from his parents or his teachers.

A wealthy lady, Rani Rashmani built a big Kali temple at Dakshineshwar and two smaller temples for Radhakanta and Shiva. His brother Ramkumar became a priest here. As the years passed by, Ramakrishna was also asked by Mathuranath, the Rani's son-in-law to accept the same work of carrying on the puja at the temple. He did not like the idea of being tied down like this, but later on he agreed to do so. Hriday, his nephew, looked after the ornaments of the Goddess.

One day the priest of the Radhakanta temple slipped and fell while carrying the image.

To be continued

The Verbal Battle

'A' said to 'an', "You're becoming unpopular, 'history' has avoided you, and 'unique' never accepted you."

"What are you two old ladies quarrelling about?" asked 'the' . "It's I who am definite. You're just decorative members of the grammar family." 'The' continued, "Remove me from 'I go to the school and the meaning changes."

Before'a' or 'an' could reply, the dainty adjective showed off "Oh! The times being what they are, you all are either dropped out, or put in where not required." "But", flashing her eyelashes, she added, "I'm wooed by all. I inject colour into a sentence. What'll it do without—tall, short, long, pretty, good, bad, and so on?"

"I think it is wrong to insult your 'demonstrative' cousins," protested 'an' . "Shut your traps," said the rude 'verb'. "I'm the 'word'. Without me, no sentence can exist. I am the uncrowned king of grammar."

"If this is how you behave, I shall not modify you," scolded the matronly 'adverb'. "Or you," pointing her finger at the 'adjective'. Stretching to his full height, the 'verb' proudly said, "Stop fussing. Don't forget, you can decorate or modify only what I 'tell' or 'assert'."

Disgusted with the 'verb's' haughty attitude, the 'preposition' cried out. "There are a number of 'weak' verbs. Moreover, is it not I who join a noun to another noun, a noun to an adjective, and a noun to a verb?"

"Nonsense," squeaked the 'adjective'. "By yourself you've little meaning, , you show no action, you name nothing, and you've no limiting function". Seeing the dejected look on the 'preposition', 'a' butted in, "You may think us unimportant, but ignore us, and a sentence becomes sloppy or collapses."

The other members of the grammar family—noun, pronoun, and conjunction, were greatly annoyed with the quarrelling. "Tut, tut," said they, "Little wonder, people find us disagreeable. We don't agree even amongst us." "Grammar without confusion is impossible," they admitted.

By *Aunty Lal*

The Soul which is the most interior of men cannot be affected by drugs.
This can only be affected by man's own will.

Quality Labs

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306/79 Jayashree Kamath
(12 years)
C/o. Mr. H. S. Kamath
P.486 Keyatola Road
Calcutta-700 029.
Hobbies : Dancing, badminton, acting, and carrom.

307/79 S. Sanjay Rao
Plot No. 1396
Sanjay House
" H " Block
Anna nagar
Madras-600 040.
Hobbies : Collecting stamps, cycling, reading, playing outdoor and indoor games, and travelling.

308/79 Madhukar S. Rao
(14 years)
29, Sindhi Society
Chembur,
Bombay-400 071.
Hobbies : Collecting stamps and coins, cricket, hockey and all games except badminton.

309/79 Madhumita Borgohain
C/o. N. C. Borgohain
Khaliamari (Near Habibulh's House)
Dibrugarh
Assam-786 001.
Hobbies : Reading, bhajans and penfriendship.

ANSWERS TO FUN WITH WORDS on page 20

1. GATE.
2. HATE.
3. FATE.
4. PIRATE.
5. VACATE.
6. IRRITATE.
7. DELICATE.
8. CELEBRATE.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES on page 22

1. Teapot.
2. A mountain with hiccups.
3. Wet.
4. O I C U.
5. Night falls and day breaks.
6. A dirty double crosser !
7. A taxi-driver.
8. Throw it straight up into the air.

It doesn't matter what people think of a just man. His reputation will take care of itself.
Indira Construction Pvt. Ltd.
6 Oak Lane, Fort, Bombay–400 001.

STINKING SPOT

"MRS. Cow, have you seen Spot this morning ?" asked Mrs. Dog.

"No, I haven't . Has he run away again?" said Mrs. Cow. "Yes. You see, I was thinking of giving him a bath", explained Mrs. Dog "and he hates having one."

Spot was a tiny pup. He was very good but he hated having a bath. When it was time for his bath, he would run away and hide. "It's two days since he has had a bath now", continued Mrs. Dog. Spot was hiding in the garage and as he crept out, he saw the chickens playing close by. "Let's play catch" he cried. "Go away, you dirty dog, you smell", said the chickens and ran away.

Poor Spot. "Who wants to play with the chickens anyway?" he thought. "I will go play with the lambs".

Just as he was about to enter the sheep's pen, Mrs. Sheep stopped him saying "No, no I will not have you dirtying my nice white lambs". "Off you go, and have a bath".

None of the animals were ready to play with Spot. "Well I will play on my own", thought Spot and started chasing butterflies.

He was so busy chasing a butterfly that he did not notice the pool of dirty water in front of him.

Splash...Splash...into the pool went Spot.

"Help, help! I am drowning", he cried.

Mrs. Dog who came by just then, ran into the pool, picked him up by the scruff of his neck and took him straight for a bath.

She rubbed and scrubbed him and soon had him smelling nice and clean.

When he went into the yard the chickens cried "Oh, its Spot, nice and clean. Let's play catch."

Soon the lambs too joined the game and Spot was very happy.

From that day onwards he had a bath everyday.

By Chitra Rao

Solitude is the audience chamber of God-

M/s. Balco

Unit No. 107, lst Floor, A-Z Industrial Estate, Fergusson Road, Bombay-400 013.

BHARAT DARSHAN

KANYAKUMARI

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

THERE are great temples and monuments all over India. Each one of them is a page from history, an epic or legend. By learning something about these great treasures, we get glimpses of the culture of Bharat. In the words of sister Nivedita:

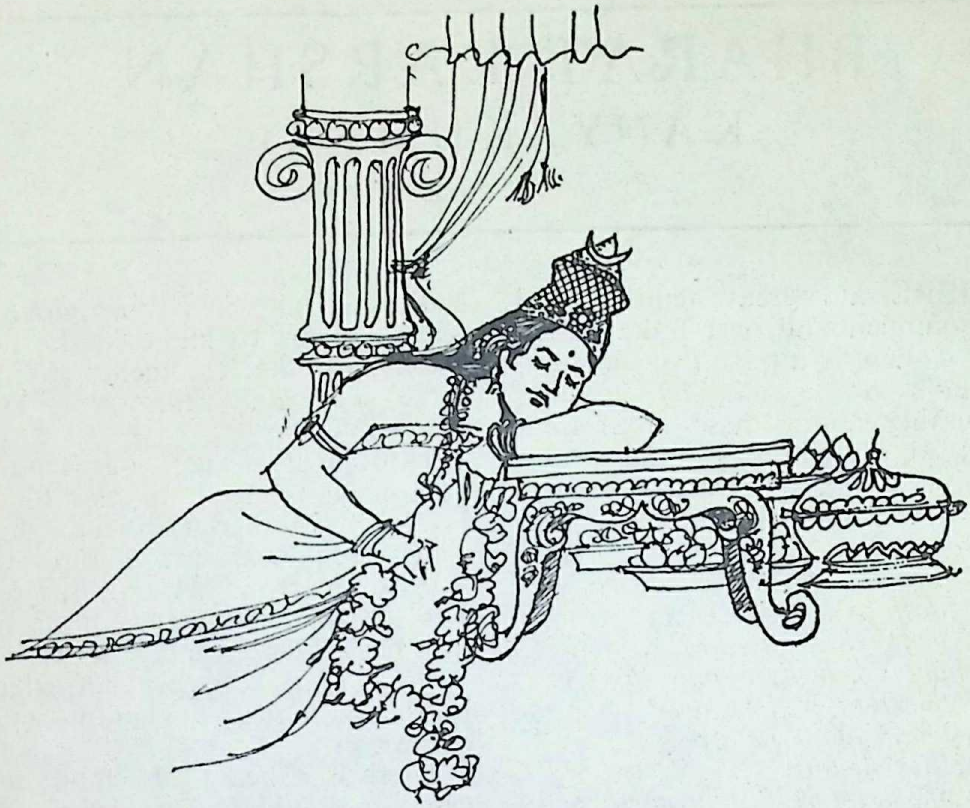
"We hear them, O Mother
Thy footfalls
Soft, soft through the ages
Touching earth here and there
And the lotuses left on
Thy footprints
Are cities historic
Ancient scriptures, and poems and temples
Noble strivings, stern struggle for right
Where lead they, O Mother !
Thy footfalls!"

We start our historical pilgrimage from Kanyakumari, the southernmost tip of Bharat. It is one of the most beautiful places and it is one of the holiest pilgrim centres. Standing on the sea-shore, you can watch in the morning, the glory of the sun rising from the Bay of Bengal and in the evening, the grandeur of the sun setting in the Arabian sea. On full-moon day, you can see the setting sun and the rising moon at the same time. An endless stream of visitors come to Kanyakumari to bathe in the holy waters of the confluence of the three seas and to see Devi Kanyakumari.

Through the ages, our country has been referred to as "Bharat Matha" (Motherland)—the snow clad Himalayas are her crown; Kanyakumari is Her Lotus feet. The three seas, the Bay of Bengal, the Indian Ocean, and the Arabian sea wash the Holy feet of Bharat Matha with their enchanting musical waves.

There is a beautiful temple dedicated to Goddess Parashakti. She is a 'Kanya' (virgin) who is doing penance. Look at the picture of Devi Kanyakumari. She is holding a rosary in Her right hand. The divine charm and entrancing beauty of Devi Kanyakumari, must be seen, to be believed.

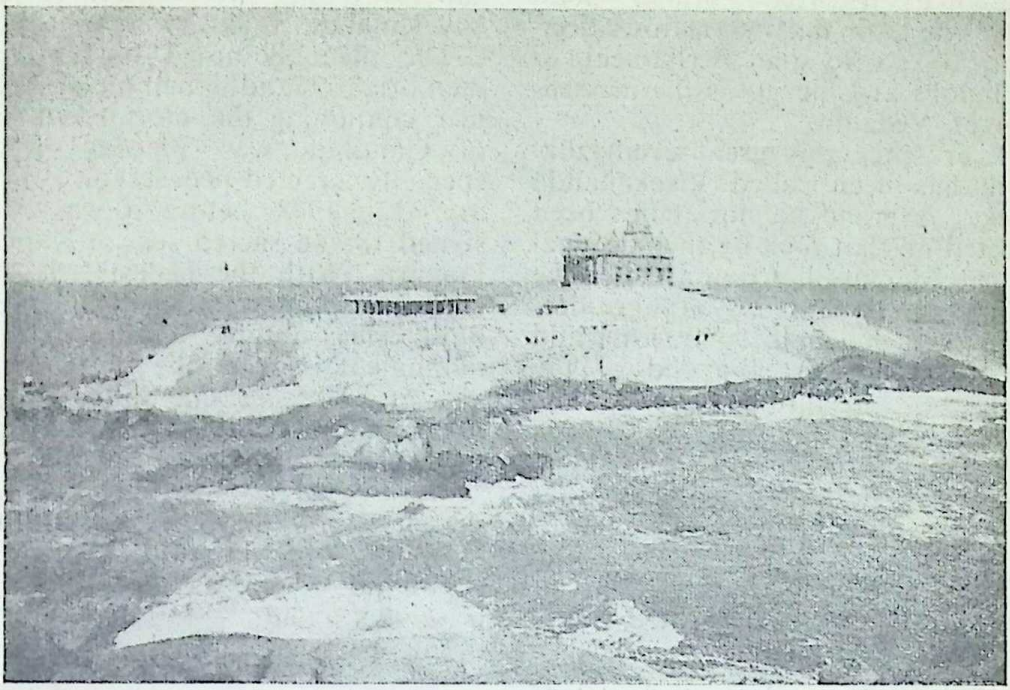
The legend about the virgin Goddess is very interesting. There was a powerful demon King Banasura. Drunk with the pride of his strength and victories, he made life hell for the sages, saints, Devas and men. He had won a boon that he could not be killed by anyone but a Kanya (virgin) . The Devas prayed to Goddess Parashakti to save them from Banasura. The divine Mother promised to restore peace



and order by conquering the evil forces led by Banasura.

Goddess Parashakti came to Kanyakumari as a Kanya and was doing penance. Lord Shiva of the temple of Suchindrum, a place about 10 kms. from Kanyakumari, wanted to marry the divine Kanya. All the preparations were made for the wedding. Narada, the divine sage was chosen by the Devas to prevent the wedding so that Banasura could be killed. The wedding was to take place at an auspicious midnight hour. Lord Shiva started for Kanyakumari so that he could reach in time. When he had gone half-way, Narada who had assumed the form of a cock, crowed loudly, announcing the approach of dawn. Lord Shiva returned to Suchindrum because the auspicious hour had passed away. Goddess Kanyakumari who had waited for the arrival of the Lord, gave up hope when it was dawn. All the food prepared for the wedding feast was turned into coloured sands by Devi—even to-day one can find many varieties of coloured pebbles and stones on the sea-shore here.

The Goddess decided to remain a virgin. Banasura who heard about Her beauty, came and requested Her hand in marriage. When the Goddess declined the offer,



he decided to take her by force. Thus the long-awaited moment came. After fierce fighting, the Devi used the Chakrayuda to kill Banasura. The Devas offered their grateful prayers for re-establishing Dharma and saving them.

The war between the Goddess and Banasura is enacted during the Dassera fastival celebrated in the temple. There are two other annual festivals of importance.

About 1600 ft. from the eastern side of the shore, there is a big rock. It is called "Sripada" rock. It is believed that the original temple of Devi Kanyakumari was on that rock. When a flood destroyed the temple, the image of the Goddess was brought to the shore and the present temple was built. The 'foot-print' on this rock is believed to be that of the Devi standing on one leg and doing penance. Hence the name 'Sri-Pada' rock.

Swami Vivekananda, who had started on a padayatra from the Himalayas, reached the land's end after three years. He bowed down before Devi Kanyakumari and he was in ecstasy. It was 25th December (1892) i.e. Christmas Day. He swam across the sea to 'Sripada' rock, unmindful of the rough waves. He spent the whole night on that sacred rock, in deep meditation. He meditated on 'the past, the present and the future of Bharat!' Like the enlightenment of Buddha under the Bodhi tree at Gaya, Swami Vivekananda was en-

lightened on 'Sripada' rock. Soon after, he took the momentous decision to go to the Parliament of Religions at Chicago as the messenger of Vedanta.

Ever since this great event that rock has been called Vivekananda rock. A grand memorial has been erected on that rock by the National Rock Memorial Committee. The entire monument is of granite. There is a big hall, 85 ft. long and 40 ft. broad. At the end of the hall, on a beautiful pedestal, the 9 ft. bronze statue of Swami Vivekananda greets us. The dome above the statue is similar to that of Sri Ramakrishna Temple at Belur.

The 'Sripada' (foot print) of Devi Kumari, is enshrined in a beautiful hall. There is also a meditation hall. A ferry service is run for taking the visitors to the Vivekananda rock.

The place is noted for another memorial, 'Gandhi mantap'. The urn, containing the mortal remains of Gandhiji, was placed on a specially erected pedestal on February 12, 1948, before it was consigned to the sacred seas at Kanyakumari. With the pedestal as the centre, a fitting monument has been built. The notable feature of this monument is that the rays of the sun at noon on Gandhiji's birthday fall on the pedestal, through a hole in the roof.

Gazing at the waves rolling on the multi-coloured sands, we echo the words of Bharathi, the great Tamil poet "On the shore of the blue seas stands 'Mother Kumari' doing penance eternally ".

The Lunar Legend

By *Chitty*

Long ago, the sea was churned by the Devas and the Rakshasas to obtain Amrut (nectar) which made a person immortal. This Amrut was distributed by the enchantress Mohini to all the Devas and Rakshasas. However two Rakshasas, Rahu and Ketu did not get a share of Amrut, so in anger they gobbled up the moon, causing complete darkness. This is the legend about the lunar eclipse.

But science has another version. In the scientific explanation, you must remember two things, firstly the Earth revolves around the Sun, and the Moon revolves round the Earth. Secondly, the Moon has no light of its own; its light is the reflected light of the sun. Now in the course of their revolutions, there comes a time when the Sun, the Earth and the Moon form a straight line, one behind the other. The Earth is between the Sun and the Moon. When this happens, the Moon is overshadowed by the Earth and it does not get the rays of the sun and having no light of its own, it appears dark. This is how the lunar eclipse is caused.

Style means proper words in the proper place—

Polyplastics Corporation

105-106, A-Z Industrial Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Bombay-400 013.

THE FATAL MISTAKE

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

By Lalogue Postvala

CLEAN-CLOTH, the dhobi lived in a small town. He was a poor man and had only a feeble donkey to carry his bundles of clothes. Since he earned very little, he could not afford to buy fodder for his donkey. The poor donkey had to fend for himself. He ate whatever grass he could find by the wayside.

One day the dhobi, wandering through the forest, saw a dead tiger. "Ah, this is lucky," he thought. "I'll put this tigerskin on my donkey and let him loose at night in the barley fields. The farmers will think that he is a tiger and will not drive him out."

Thus at midnight when it was pitch-dark, Clean-Cloth put the tigerskin on his donkey and took him to a barley field. The donkey ate barley to his heart's content. At dawn, the laundryman took his donkey back to the barn. Feeling happy that he had solved the food problem for his donkey, he selected a different barley field every night.

As time passed by, the donkey grew plump, until he could hardly squeeze into his barn.

However, one night, it so happened that the donkey whilst grazing in a barley field, heard the bray of a she-donkey in the distance. At the mere sound, he too began to bray. The farmers were surprised to hear a tiger bray. When they realised that a donkey in tiger-skin had fooled them and eaten their precious barley they were very annoyed. In their anger they hammered the donkey with sticks, stones, and arrows. The poor donkey died.

The truth can never be hidden for long nor can one shine in borrowed feathers. To summarize the story .....

However skilful in disguise
However skilful to the eyes
Although in tiger-skin arrayed
The ass was killed—because he brayed.

IN SEARCH OF HAPPINESS

By Lalita Frazier

IT was only yesterday when a young child named Mohan was thinking. Mohan thought "why is it that all these toys are so dull and no longer fun? I wish I could be happy: yes, to be happy is greater than any toy. For toys get old and break or get lost, but happiness cannot get old, or broken or lost. Yes, that's it! If I could have anything in the whole wide world, just one thing, I'd ask for happiness."

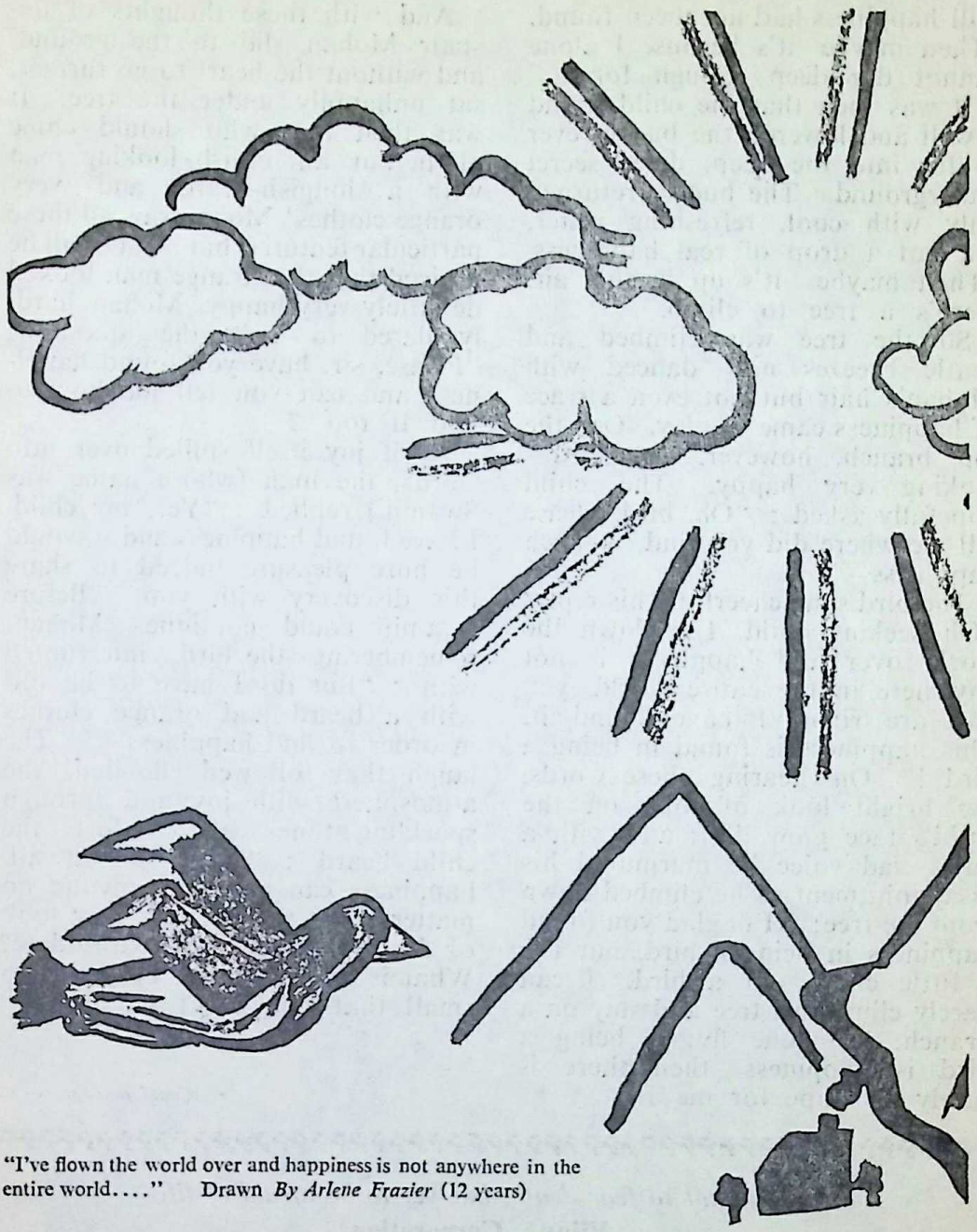
Now what Mohan did not know was that here was a desire that, once thought of, would never go away until it was gained. But the trouble with wanting happiness is that happiness is not a thing that can be found like a toy or a treat to eat. No, happiness is something invisible. Real, lasting happiness is something we all know we want, but who really knows what and where happiness is? Mohan also didn't know where happiness could be found so he decided to wait and see if happiness would come to him all by itself.

He waited and waited for what seemed to be an awfully long time, but still there was no sign of happiness: nor did he know any better what exactly happiness was. All he knew was that happiness was the best thing to have. Perhaps wishing would bring happiness?

So Mohan wished with all his might. And even staying alert and watching very carefully for the wished-for happiness to appear, did not bring happiness. Now Mohan became very sad and so anxious to find happiness that he could not wait or wish any longer, and with a burning eagerness to find the one thing that mattered in life, he started to search for happiness.

Naturally the first place Mohan looked for happiness was in the very neighbourhood in which he lived. He thought: "It must be somewhere very close because it seems that other people have got it. Maybe neighbours know where it is..." He asked the man next door. "Have you got happiness in your life ? And, if so, where did you find it ?" The neighbour honestly confessed "yes, I have happiness, but the happiness is the kind that comes and goes and I really don't know how I got it. It seems to just come by itself and goes whenever it wants to. But, silly child, why even think about it? Just enjoy it when it comes—that's enough!"

Mohan wasn't satisfied with this answer. "Happiness *must* come from somewhere, *be* somewhere and I'm going to find it!! It probably is hidden. Maybe happiness is in the earth? I'll dig for



"I've flown the world over and happiness is not anywhere in the entire world...." Drawn *By Arlene Frazier* (12 years)

happiness!" So with a shovel and fixed purpose he dug and dug..... dug until he had to stop from tiredness and it was time for dinner.

Still happiness had not been found. "Then maybe it's because I alone cannot dig deep enough for it."

It was then that the child found a well and lowered the bucket ever so far into the deep, dark, secret underground. The bucket returned only with cool, refreshing water, but not a drop of real happiness. "Then maybe it's up in the air. Here's a tree to climb."

So the tree was climbed and gentle breezes now danced with Mohan's hair but not even a trace of happiness came to play. On the top branch, however, sat a bird—looking very happy. The child hopefully asked : "Oh, bird, please tell me where did you find so much happiness ?"

The bird sang cheerfully his reply: "Oh, seeking child, I've flown the world over and happiness is not anywhere in the entire world, yet, you are right, I have found it. This happiness is found in being a bird !" On hearing these words, the bright look of hope on the child's face grew dim; and with a quiet, sad voice he murmured his disappointment as he climbed down from the tree: "I'm glad you found happiness in being a bird, but I'm a little child, not a bird. I can barely climb this tree and stay on a branch, let alone fly: if being a bird is happiness then there is surely no hope for me !!"

And with these thoughts of despair Mohan slid to the ground, and without the heart to go further, sat unhappily under the tree. It was then that who should come along but an oldish-looking man with a longish-beard and very orange clothes! Mohan saw all these particular features, but most of all he noticed that the strange man looked definitely very happy. Mohan hardly dared to ask the question: "Please, sir, have you found happiness and can you tell me how to find it too ?"

As if joy itself spilled over into words, the man (whose name was Swamiji) replied : "Yes, my child, I have found happiness and it would be pure pleasure indeed to share this discovery with you." Before Swamiji could continue, Mohan, remembering the bird, interrupted with : "But do I have to be old with a beard and orange clothes in order to find happiness ?" The laugh that followed flooded the atmosphere with joy and through sparkling tones of comfort the child heard : "No , not at all, happiness can come to anyone no matter what age, or how they look or dress. Hey, do you like riddles? What is as big as can be yet is so small that you don't see it ?"

[*Contd. on page no.* 32

Suicide is not to fear death, but yet to be afraid of life—

Vijay Corporation

2nd Floor, Ideal Industrial Estate, Tulsipipe Road,
Lower Parel, Bombay - 400 013.

A TURKISH TOWEL'S FLIGHT

By Shalu

Characters :

Anita	Mani
Anju	Gurkha
Sanjay	Towel
Neena	Breeze

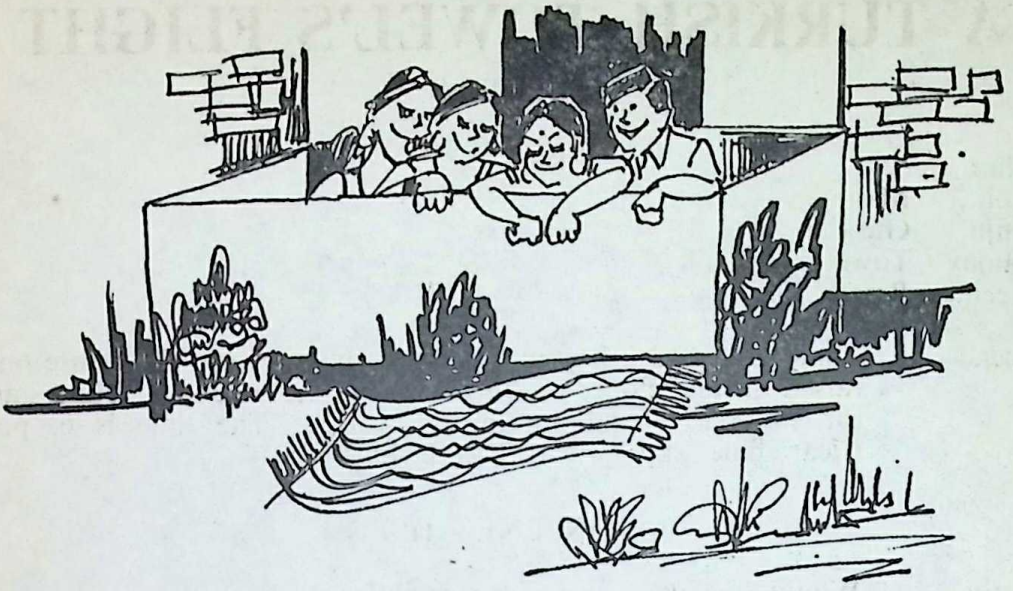
Scene : Three girls and a boy in the big drawing room of a house on a raised ground floor, walking towards the balcony. They stand for some time—talking in low voices. The time is 6. p.m. Clear blue sky, warm breeze blowing.

(SCENE - I)

Anita : Would you like a cup of tea or coffee ?
Neena : Not me.
Sanjay : (clearing his throat) : Wouldn't mind some.
Anju : (shaking her head) : No thanks.
Anita : (sheepishly*) : Well ..... first of all, I'll see if there is any milk in the house.
(Exit Anita).
Anita : (in the distance) : Mani, please make some tea.
(She comes back to the balcony).
Anita : Sorry folks — no milk — no tea.
Chorus : For the want of milk
A cuppa was lost,
May we of the same ilk*
Unite at any cost.

(SCENE - II)

Anita : Do you feel like a walk ?
Neena : (laughingly) : Why, do you want to get rid of us ?
Anita : (thoughtfully) : No.....
Neena : (seriously): Or do you want us to get some milk ?
Anita : (shaking her tawny* head and adjusting her glinting* glasses). Not unless you really need tea. I meant—it's such a beautiful day (she sweeps her arms as though she would like to embrace the world). And I am sick of reading that book.
(She leans out on the balcony and suddenly stiffens).



Anita : Hey ! My towel!
(All the others lean out and see an orange towel lying on the ground).
Neena : (chattily) : It's a beautiful towel.
Sanjay : Yes, indeed it is.
Anju : 'Tis an experience we wouldn't like to miss !
Anita : (wailingly) : But my towel—it has fallen down !

(SCENE - III)

(A few minutes ago, the towel had decided it was time it saw the world).

Towel : O, look at me—being used by these thoughtless, cruel human beings and then left here, hanging on the line—till they need me again. Unloved, unappreciated! What am I doing here ? I am still young, still attractive. It's time I saw the world and joined my fellow towels. It's time I broke away from this slavery. It's time I.....
Breeze : O, you beautiful towel—you lovely orange towel. What are you looking so sad about ? 'Tis a beautiful world. Come with me. I'll show you God's creations.
Towel : (being a loyal turkish at heart) : But how can I leave my mistress ? She needs me !

Breeze : (blowing): Forsooth ! 'Tis time you breathed the air of freedom. Come with me! Come !
(The towel is hypnotized and lets the breeze lift it from the line).

Towel : Oh! 'Tis glorious! What freedom! What light! Hey, what are you doing?

Breeze : (with a sneering laugh): You stay-at-homes, you wall-flowers! Did you think I was going to burden my lilywhite hands with you? (Breezes off).

Towel : (sadly) : O, please do not desert me. Alone am I, unprotected in this wide, cruel world—left to the mercies of Nature. O please...

(SCENE - IV)

Anita : My towel, my towel! What will I do without my towel! I must have my towel! How did it fall there?

Neena : 'Tis a mystery!

Anita : Mani! Get my towel! It has fallen on the ground !

Mani : Yes Ma'am.
(Anita and the other three continue to stand on the balcony, content since the matter is now in Mani's strong hands. About a minute has passed. Suddenly, Anita looks down again.

Anita : Hey, my towel is not there anymore!

Neena : (comfortingly): Mani must have picked it up.

Anita : But I don't think he has even left the house yet !

Neena : He must have. He will bring it back.

Chorus : O bring back, O bring back, O bring back my towel to me, to me!
(There is a bang at the door).

Anita : See, that's Mani just going down.
(They all lean out dangerously over the balcony, but there is no sign of the towel).

Neena : (pointing): There's Mani !

Anita : Mani have you got my towel ?

Mani : (shaking his curly head) : It is not here.

Anita : My towel, my towel! It's been robbed from right under my innocent nose ! What am I to do?
(There is great confusion—tramping down the stairs, voices, dust, noise, the creak of the elevator going up and down).
My towel! Mani! Gurkha! Find my towel!
(More confusion, more tramping, more voices, more dust, more creaks).

Chorus : (Gurkha and Mani): There is no sign of your towel, ma'am.

Anita : Find the robber! Search the grounds! Search the building! Call the police ! I want my towel back! It's the only one I have ! What will I do ? O, to think it was robbed with me

looking on. O the thought is unbearable! What are you staring at me for ? Find my towel !
(Gurkha and Mani stop gaping*)

Gurkha & Mani : Yes ma'am,
The towel we shall search
The towel we shall find.
Our mistress will not be in a lurch*
For to us she is so kind!
(Exit Gurkha and Mani).

(SCENE - V)

Anita : (woefully) : What will I do?
Neena : (helpfully) : Why don't you buy a new one?
Anita : Broke! O I'm broke! Nishi! Nishi!
(A head pops out of the second floor)
Please come down!
Neena : (even more helpfully) : Why don't you borrow Nishi's towel?
(Laughter in the background).
Anita : (in a loud voice): Neena, **I do not think I like your sympathy.**
Neena : (puzzled) : It was not sympathy. I was only being practical.
Anita : (at a loss for words): Well .....
Neena : 'Tis a mystery ! 'Tis a mystery!
O how I love mysteries!
Chorus : A mystery it was,
A mystery it shall remain
To Anita 'tis a loss
To the thief 'tis a gain.
May the Heavens look down 'pon Anita's plight*
And solve this mystery of the towel and its flight!
(The curtain comes down to a thunderous applause from the audience).

x x x x x

* **sheepishly** — in an embarrassed way, as if having done something wrong or foolish.
* **ilk** — family, class or kind.
* **tawny** — dull yellowish brown (colour)
* **glinting** — reflecting, flashing (in the sun)
* **gaping** — staring in astonishment or with mouth wide open.
* **lurch** — an uncomfortable situation.
* **plight** — bad condition.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Renuka Neogi

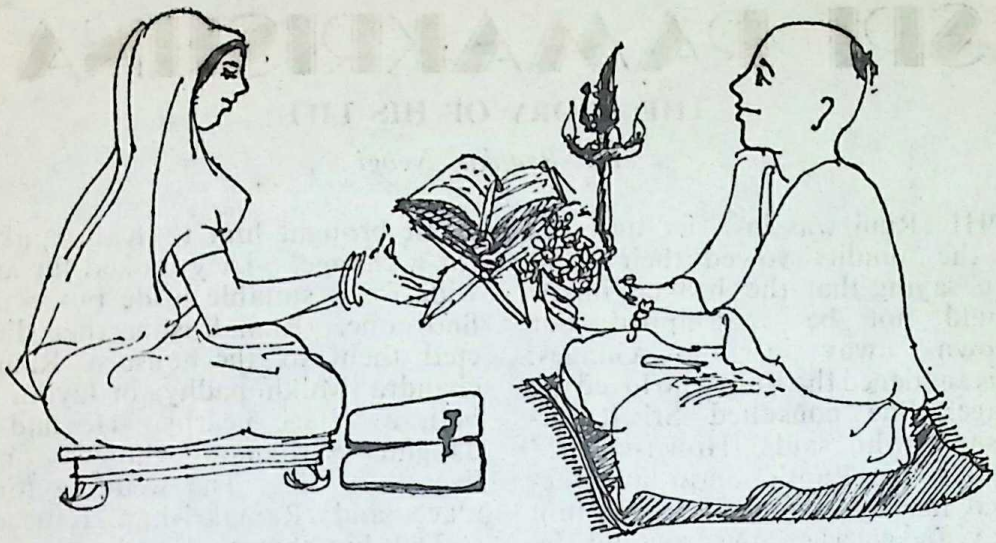
THE Rani was in a fix and all the pundits voiced their concern, saying that the broken image should not be worshipped but thrown away in the Ganges. This saddened the Rani who loved the image. She consulted Sri Ramakrishna who said "How foolish!" Suppose the Rani's son-in-law fractured his leg, would she send him away, and get a new one or would she arrange for his treatment? The problem was solved and Sri Ramakrishna was asked to repair the image. This image can still be seen at the Dakshineshwar temple.

His method of worship was unique. He longed to have the vision of the Divine Mother. He hardly slept and would sit for hours together before the image. One day in agony, he leapt up and took the sword hanging on the wall to put an end to his life. He suddenly fell down unconscious and saw himself merging in an ocean of light. The mother appeared in all her splendour and stood before him, smiling and talking. From then on, the image was more real to him than all the external objects of the world.

People everywhere took him to be mad. His mother received strange reports about her son. She became anxious and decided to marry him off in the hope that it would improve his health. Mathur Babu brought him to Kamarpukur for a change. They looked far and wide for a suitable bride but could find none. Ramakrishna then directed them to the house of Ramachandra Mukhopadhya in Jayarambati, a village nearby. He had a daughter Sardamoni who was only five years old. The wedding took place and Ramakrishna returned to Dakshineshwar where he plunged once more into spiritual practices.

After a lapse of few years, Totapuri, a monk came and recognised the greatness of his disciple. He taught him the Vedantic Sadhana, that is worship of God in his formless aspect. He achieved this state of total absorption in a very short time — three days. The monk was wonderstruck as it took him forty long years to do so. After spending many happy days with him, Totapuri took leave.

At this time when Ramakrishna was immersed in the thought of oneness of all things, there came to him a Sufi Fakir from whom he learnt to see God by practising Islam. For three days he lived like a Muslim doing the namaz and uttering the name of Allah. He did not enter the temple of Kali then. After this, one day he saw a beautiful picture of the Madonna and the Christ. Immediately the picture became alive for him; he saw the brilliant rays of light com-



ing out of it and entering his being. For three days he continued like this and stopped going to the Kali temple. On the fourth day when he was strolling near the Panchavati, he had the vision of Christ who came towards him and embraced him.

Thus he realised the truth through various religious practices and proved to mankind that all religions are true and that they are different paths to the same God.

Mathur Babu had received modern education; he could not accept whatever Ramakrishna said. One day he argued that "Even the Lord has to obey His own Laws. Once he has made a law he too can't go against it ". But Sri Ramakrishna objected and replied "The Lord can do whatever he wills". Mathur refused to believe. Next day Ramakrishna saw in the garden a hibiscus plant with blood red and pure white flowers growing on the same branch. He brought this and showed it to Mathur who was astonished at this and accepted his defeat.

At the age of 18, Sardadevi, came to stay at Dakshineshwar. Contrary to all reports, she found her husband perfectly sane, very loving and kind. Earlier her husband had taught her how to carry out her household duties, godly living, how to worship, how to serve her

Sympathy is the comfort of the poor—

M/s. Balco

Unit No. 107, lst Floor, A-Z Industrial Estate, Fergusson Road, Bombay-400 013.

elders, how to behave with others etc. Now on the new moon day, he worshipped her as the embodiment of the Divine Mother. She sat on a special seat. Sri Ramakrishna worshipped her as the Goddess is worshipped with sandal paste, flowers etc... She was not an ordinary wife but his spiritual one and came to be known as the Holy Mother to all her devotees.

After his deep spiritual sadhana, he would avoid the company of selfish and worldly-minded people and longed to meet those who had a real thirst for God and to whom he could hand down his divine knowledge. Many people flocked around him. One such was Keshab Chandra Sen, the leader of the Brahmo Samaj; his followers became devoted to Sri Ramakrishna. At this period, there used to be gatherings at the devotees' houses where there was devotional singing and people spent time joyfully in his company. Often he used to enter into Samadhi (total absorption in God consciousness).

I SEE GOD

It was a wonderful sight to see. People would watch with amazement written on their faces. On one such occasion, Narendra Datta came to him. He was a brilliant student with a sharp intellect and keen memory. He was also a good sportsman and possessed all the qualities of a born leader of men. To crown it all, he was of pure heart and mind, with a yearning to know about God. With this thirst, he visited several great men but none of them could satisfy him. At last he came to Sri Ramakrishna and asked "Sir, have you seen God ?" Promptly came the reply "Yes, I can see Him just as I see you here, only more intensely," and then continued "God can be realised and seen and talked to. But who cares? People cry and weep for money and enjoyment but who weeps for God ?" This bold statement impressed the young boy and he started coming to him very often.

To be continued.

International Drawing Competition.

A world wide competition of drawing by children under 12 has been organised for the International year of the child by UNESCO, UNICEF and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees. The first 10 prizes will be a trip to Paris for eight days. The 10 best drawings from each country will be sent to UNESCO Headquarters in Paris by April 1979. By May 15, the International prizes will be awarded. National prizes will be given to Indian winners who do not win the International Prizes.

The theme of the competition is "My life in the year 2000".

Send your entries to :-

UNICEF, South Central Asia Region,
Jor Bagh, New Delhi - 110 003.

Smart Alec

Once an Indian and an American met.

American (to the Indian) : You Indians! What have you done? We have conquered the moon and now are trying to conquer all the planets.

Indian : Well, you have conquered the moon, but we are trying to conquer the sun.

American : Are you crazy? Don't you know that you will be burnt to ashes by the heat of the sun.

Indian : (laughing) Oh! that's a very simple matter, we will go at night.

* * *

First Aid Instructor : How would you rescue a man from drowning ?

An eager Pupil : O sir! That's easy, first of all take the man out of the water and then take the water out of the man.

By Debasish Gupta

A teacher was giving a lesson on cannibals. One day, she saw that little Johnny did not understand it, so she told him: Johnny, if you ate your father and mother, what would you be ?

Johnny replied : An orphan, miss.

* * *

I say Smith, are you using your shears this afternoon?

Smith : Er— yes I am.

Righto. You won't be wanting your golf clubs then, so I'll just borrow them.

* * *

Two travellers arrived at the hotel and were shown a rather dingy room.

Said one : What does this pig-sty cost ?

Promptly the proprietor replied: For one pig, five dollars; for two pigs nine dollars per day.

* * *

Woman : These bananas are not good. I can hardly peel them.

Shopkeeper: Well, what do you expect for 10 paise ; zip fasteners on them?

By Rajesh Pamnani (13 years)

RIDDLES

1. Which is the world's wealthiest country ?
2. What happened when the light went out in the local meeting?
3. What is the best thing to do when you split your sides with laughter ?
4. What did the navigator say when the doctor said that his temperature was 104 degrees?
5. Why did the boy call his pet terrier "Blacksmith"?
6. Where does success come before work?
7. When did only three vowels exist?
8. Why did the burglar cut the legs of his bed ?

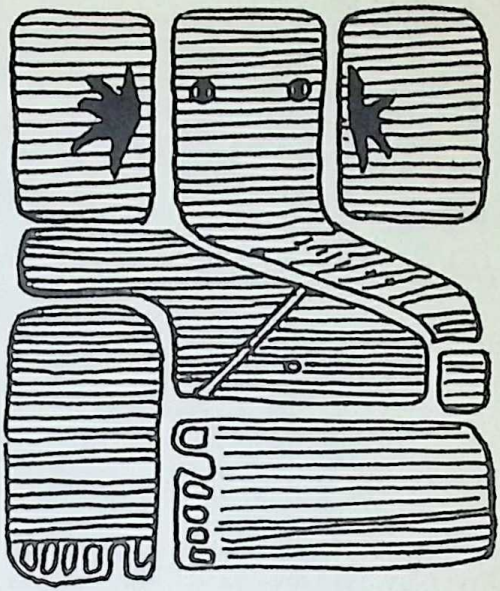
Answers on page no. 22

Multiplication

"Multiplication is vexation"—
That is what they said,
It bothers me in my head.
I can do quite well if I'm told to tell,
the whole table through,
but dodging about quite puts me out
till I don't know what to do.
When seven times five is thirty-five
I can tell you seven times six,
But seven times eight must kindly
wait, or get me into a mix.

By Rajesh Menon.

LORD GANESH IN MODERN ART



By Sudhir Sanil (15 years)

How observant are you?

There are five flowers hidden amongst the weeds of words in the sentences below. See if you can find them!

1. Joan flung down the pans, yelling for her sister.
2. Looking distressed, Jethro set about packing his belongings.
3. They discovered the Italian girl, Feli, lying bound and gagged.
4. The announcer stepped on to the dais, yelling in vain for silence.
5. "That's asking a lot, Ustad", complained Yusuf.

Answers on page no. 22

To know how to hide one's ability is great skill—
Quality Labs
Bombay — Bangalore.

310/79 Mr. D. Souza
(16 years)
C/o. Mr. D. K. Ray
P. O. Khardah
24 Parganas
West Bengal (743 155).

Hobbies : Collecting stamps, First Day Covers, view cards, magazines, radio news and Bible & Gospel literature.

311/79 Rakeshkumar Harchwani
(15 years)
BK-2108 /11-A
Ulhasnagar-421 005
Dt. Thane (Maharashtra).

Hobbies : Penfriendship, sports, music, stamps & view cards.

312/79 R. Seetha
(14 years)
5/3 A. C. C. Colony
Madukkarai.

Hobbies : Penfriendship, singing, movies, dancing, and reading story books.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES on page no. 21

1. Ireland, because its capital (money) is always *Dublin* (doubling).
2. The crowd shot up their hands and said, 'Many hands make light work'.
3. Run around till you get a stitch in them.
4. "East or West longitude?"
5. Because everytime some one called him, he made a bolt for the door.
6. In a dictionary.
7. Before you (U) and I (I) were born.
8. To lie low for a while.

By V. Shyam (13 years)

Answers to How observant are you?

Pansy — (pans, yelling)
Rose — (Jethro set)
Lily — (Feli, lying)
Daisy — (dais, yelling)
Lotus — (lot, Ustad)

Please Note

Payments for the subscriptions or their renewals or advertisements should be made in the name of Central Chinmaya Mission Trust and not in the name of Bal Vihar.

Cleverness comes with the body; wisdom from the Lord—

Indira Construction Private Limited
6, Oak Lane, Fort, Bombay-400 001.

Hello, I am Honey Bee!

By Ravi Menon.

DO you ever think of me when you sip honey? I am Honey Bee, personally responsible for your most natural tonic.

In a 3000 year old Egyptian Royal Tomb opened recently, a jar of honey was found. Surprisingly, it was still fragrant and was excellent to eat. The quality improves with keeping.

I am one of the busiest and most active creatures, in the oldest group of animal kingdoms "INSECTA". Every day from dawn to dusk, I fly like a jet, buzzing for miles, chit-chatting with multicoloured fragrant flowers while sipping honey. Each member of a hive makes 20,000 trips covering approximately 64,000 kms. for half a kg. of honey!

The honey may have varying taste, depending on the type of flower and the soil where it grows. The honey is collected by the "WORKER BEES". We undergo training for this under a tutor. During the training period we have to accompany him and learn from him. The honey thus collected is preserved in a hexagonal waxcell in the honey comb. It changes to form food in the winter.

Many entomologists (zoologists specialised in the study of insects) wonder how I return to the same place after travelling miles in the morning. What guides me to come back to the same castle (hive) from where I took off ? This is a secret between my creator and me.

Mine is a give-and-take policy. I sip honey that is specially stored in flowers which attract me. At the same time, I collect on my wings and legs minute "pollen grains", for their multiplication. This process is known as "POLLINATION". Only then does the tree bear fruits and seeds. Am I selfish? Not at all !

Our entire family is under the supreme command of our "QUEEN BEE". The secret of our success is "We stand united and we work hard".

Honey is an excellent instant, natural energy-giver. It heals wounds and burns. A tablespoon full in lukewarm water or milk soothes sore throats and eases constipation. Only fresh honey has a laxative effect. For diabetic patients suffering from excess sugar in their blood, this will be a boon. It is good for digestion and general health.

Sympathy is the sufferer's physician—
Shri Govindabhai K. Raja
68/F Napean Sea Road, Suvas Apartments, 4th Floor, Bombay–400 006.

A HOLI STORY

By *Chitra Rao*

There was a demon called Tarakasura, who could be killed only by Lord Shiva's son. Parvati was in love with Lord Shiva and wanted to marry him, but Shiva sat deep in meditation and would not open his eyes. The Devas, who were on Parvati's side, wanted to bring about a wedding between Parvati and Shiva so that their son could kill Tarakasura.

The Devas went to Manmatha (God of love) and requested him to do something to distract Shiva's attention so that he would open his eyes and see Parvati, who was seated before him.

Manmatha agreed to help them. He went to the place where Shiva was meditating and shot an arrow of flowers towards him. Shiva was distracted and opened his eyes. He was very angry when he saw that it was Manmatha who had disturbed him. He opened his third eye in the centre of his forehead and burnt Manmatha.

Manmatha's wife was very distressed. For no fault of his. her husband had been burnt to death. So she went to Lord Shiva and explained to him that Manmatha had only obeyed the Devas. Shiva realised his mistake and gave a boon to Manmatha's wife that only she could see her husband. From that day onwards every year in spring we celebrate Holi.

WORD BANK

By Anand K. (9 years)

The words given here have a few letters missing. But they all end with ght. How many blanks can you fill?

1. Dismount : — — — ght.
2. Brilliant : — — — ght.
3. Great Pleasure : — — — — ght.
4. One more than seven — — ght.
5. Quarrel : — — ght.
6. Strength : — — ght.
7. Time from sunset to sunrise : — — ght.
8. Correct : — — ght.
9. Spectacle : — — ght
10. Compact : — — ght.

Answers on page no. 29

Sorrow is the cloud, tears are the rain—
Jolly & Maker
Maker Bhavan No. 2, New Marine Lines, Bombay - 400 020.

Eating Forgetfulness

A Japanese folk tale

IN Japan they have two kinds of ginger—one of these is called Myoga ginger. A Japanese proverb says that one should not eat too much of this ginger because it makes one forgetful.

Once upon a time, there was an innkeeper. A traveller came to stay at the inn. The servant showed him up to his room. Then he came down and told his master "That man has a lot of money". "Is that so?" said the innkeeper, "how shall we make him spend all of it here?" The innkeeper was a greedy man and not doing very well in his business. "Well", said the servant, "they say ginger makes one forgetful. He will leave his money behind".

"That is a good idea" said the master, "let us try it".

And so they served him ginger with all his food. Whenever the traveller went out, they were sure to put some ginger in the lunch packet that they packed for him.

At last, after some days the traveller left for good. When he left, the innkeeper felt a little uncomfortable and worried. He was sure the traveller would return asking for his money. But he did not come back after all. Then the innkeeper told the servant "Go now, and fetch that box of money from the room the traveller stayed in" and the servant ran up. He looked all over, but could not find the money anywhere.

"He did not leave the money behind", he said to his master, running back, "it is nowhere there".

"Then the ginger is no good, is it?" said the master, "what they say is not true".

"Hm, yes master", said the servant "but the ginger did work in this case. He did forget something very important."

"And what was that"? asked the innkeeper.

"He forgot to pay the bill!" said the servant.

By Sunil Wariar

DO YOU KNOW?

1. That the *tallest woman* in the world has a height of 7 feet and 5½ inches and is still growing?
2. That the *shortest adult* had a height of just 23.2 inches ?
3. That the *heaviest human being* in the world had a weight of 1069 lbs? When he died, he was buried in a coffin the size of a piano. This famous man was Mr. Robert Earl Hugh.
4. That the McQuire brothers (Billy and Benny) are the heaviest twins ?

By Rajan T. Damodaran (16 years)

The World of Darkness

By Uma Raman

THERE are nine million blind people in India. A lot is being done to help them. But, there are also those unfortunate ones who cannot benefit because people do not care enough.

Let us skip briefly through the history of blindness. In ancient times, blindness was considered a curse. So, nothing was done about it. Blind people in ancient Greece were thrown to the dogs or starved or left in the jungle.

In ancient India, where belief in 'karma' or fate was widespread, people used to believe that the blind person had earned his blindness because of the misdeeds of his past life.

In modern times, things have changed for the better. India has made a lot of progress where services for the blind are concerned. But let us see the losses blind children suffer.

Firstly, they have to be helped in moving around until they can do so by themselves. Even their daily activities like eating, bathing, playing etc. are affected.

Suppose, the mother of a blind boy is very angry with him, he has to rely on the tone of her voice to judge what mood she is in.

Normal children go to school every day and learn things in a way that blind children are not able to. The normal child sees what the teacher writes on the board. The blind child cannot do this and thus loses all this information. Also, a blind child cannot play all the games a normal child can.

Here are a few practical tips which will help to make things easier for the blind child without making him feel that he is different from you.

If you are guiding him, for even small things like crossing the road, do so by placing your hand on his elbow. Not only does this show him the way, but he is also comforted by the thought that someone is there with him and he is not alone.

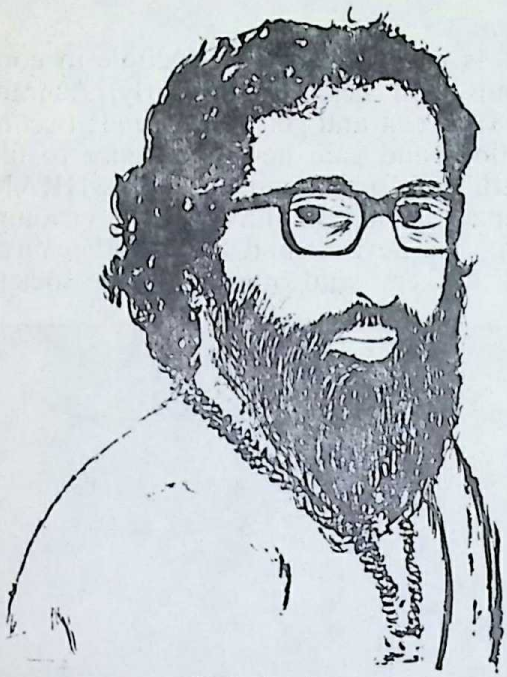
When you ask him to sit down, draw out a chair for him so that he can hear where it is instead of letting him grope around for a chair to sit on.

When you are guiding him on the staircase, don't tell him suddenly, "the steps are here". It might come as a shock to him. Moreover, he might have already stepped down and fallen. Instead, prepare him by telling him that you are now at the landing and that the steps are a little distance away.

These, and other such small gestures really go a long way to make your blind friend more at ease. If you are nice to him, he can be as much fun as anyone else.

"EVERYTHING IS A GIFT FROM GOD"

SWAMI Chinmayanandaji answers the questions that I have asked him on your behalf.



By S. Gopal

What made you want to renounce the world?

I happen to love God more than the world. Therefore it appears to the people who love only the world and worldly pleasures that I have renounced the world. If that was the case, why did I come back from the Himalayas? I came only because I love the world more than all of you.

You do not love the world, you love the joys the world gives you. Whenever the world happens to provide you with sorrows, you start hating the world. But when you love the Lord and when you understand that the world is nothing but the Lord in another form, you begin to really love the world, whether it be good or bad. It is then that we love the world as our own beloved, whether we are happy or not.

How far have you succeeded in getting your philosophy across?

I do not have a philosophy *of my own* to teach others. I am only preaching the philosophy of our own forefathers, the great Rishis and their

What values do you think children should have?

I think children should explore and discover the world of LOVE and the secrets of its techniques. These are explained in my letters to the children "I love you". Sevaks and Sevikas (of Bala Vihars) can explain them to the children in the vernacular.

Do you have any special message for the children?

The idea that I would like to pass on to my children is in the last para of the message. Let Sevaks and Sevikas explain the "gift idea"; everything we have is His gift to us. How we develop these gifts and gratefully use them for the benefit of others is our loving gift to the Lord.

glorious words. The philosophy that I teach is the most ancient philosophy in the world, the Hindu philosophy. Hinduism never dies. It cannot because it talks of the *truth*, that remains ever the same in the past, in the present and in the future. The world may change; our lives may change; people will change; even the government and social order will change — but Hinduism, as a philosophy, will remain the same.

Why was it necessary to build an Ashram ?

What is the need for a hospital? Is it not for the sick people to come and rest and get treated to recoup their health? Similarly, Ashrams are "hospitals" where we come to take rest and get re-educated: become healthy in our thoughts and emotions and gain new confidence to face our problems in life. Such a "harbour" for the mind is an ASHRAM. It is in our Ashram, the Sandeepany, that we have been training Brahmacharis, Bala Vihar children, the Sevikas and Sevaks, the Yuvakendra boys and girls, our school teachers and others to serve society.

Rakhi Shah garlanding Swami Harinamananda on February 7th, the inauguration day of the 71st Geeta Gyana Yagna held at Geeta Mandir Hall, Vile Parle. Swami Harinamananda is a disciple of Swami Chinmayananda.

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BR. VENKATARAO

RAMAYANA

INTRODUCTION

Anantha Narayanan (Mani), the author, is a devotee of Swami Chinmayanandaji. He is a product of the Chinmaya study groups. In his spare time, he has made a thorough and analytical study of the original Valmiki Ramayana.

Man v/s Animal :

THIS beautiful world created by the Lord consists of THINGS and BEINGS—those which have no life and those which have life. The lifeless part of the world is known as the mineral kingdom made up of the earth and other elements. The Beings can be divided into three types depending upon the extent of life expressed through each type. They are the plant kingdom, the animal kingdom and the humans. The mineral kingdom (stone) is not aware of itself and has no reaction at all to the conditions outside. But the plant, which depends upon the mineral kingdom, has limited expression of life as it reacts to heat, moisture and air. However, it cannot seek food or care for its seedlings.

The animals, on the other hand, are superior to the plants. As they advance from the single cell, amoeba through the fish, frog, reptile, bird to the complex ape, they are created to be in a better position to know and react to the world. Thus, the advanced type of animals, the mammals, are capable of seeking food, taking care of the young and defending themselves against danger, etc. But they are not aware of themselves. If the elephant or lion or tiger knew about its own strength, there would be no circus at all! Animals cannot think and have no clear feelings like the humans. They are unable to choose their actions. Though they can be trained to an extent, they live mostly by instincts.

However, man is blessed by the Lord with the head and heart—the head for knowing and choosing his actions and a heart to feel the emotions of love, fellow feeling, etc. Thus, he cannot only understand the happenings in the wide world around but is also deeply aware of his own feelings and those of others. He is also blessed with a memory and hence can continuously improve himself from his past experience and new knowledge acquired through his education.

But there is one important difference between man and animal. Although animals have no choice and cannot change their nature, the Lord has provided for their safety. For example, the nature

of a tiger cannot be changed to that of a cow and vice versa. But by instinct even puppies or kittens know from birth that fire is dangerous. The animals know where and when to stop eating, breeding etc. and hence they are able to survive inspite of dangers.

As a contrast, in the case of man, the automatic control and safety is not there. For example a small child puts everything in its mouth, not knowing what is good and what is bad. It does not know that fire is hot, and gets burnt. Hence its mother has always to keep a close watch and educate the child on what is good and what is bad.

Therefore, unless man is taught to choose from childhood as to what is good for him and to avoid what is harmful, he would be worse than an animal in his behaviour and action! He would be a dangerous animal. Man is responsible for all wars in history and the resulting destruction of life and property. No animal is known to kill deliberately. Even the tiger becomes a 'man-eater', causing destruction, only after tasting man and acquiring his evil nature! That is why human beings are required to be properly educated to be healthy, and useful members of society.

There is an ancient Sanskrit saying which clearly states the difference between man and animal:

आहार निद्रा भय मैथुनंच
सामान्य मेतत् पशुभिर्नराणाम् ।
धर्मोहि एकोऽप्यधिको विशेषः
धर्मेण हीनाः पशुभिः समानाः ।।

This means: "Four things are common between man and animal. They are food, sleep, fear and breeding. However, the important difference between them is Dharma. Man without Dharma is like an animal ".

Dharma means righteousness, the highest education for the upliftment of man to enable him to live intelligently and happily, caring for others. Since man can choose, he has to be educated in Dharma to choose wisely so that he may become a useful member of society. The noble saints and wise men of India were taught Dharma and they lived at all times a Dharmic life as an example to others. They were solely guided in their thoughts, words and deeds by noble values such as truth, love, compassion, gratitude, forgiveness, tolerance, fellow-feeling, etc.

Left to himself, without guidance and training, man's choice of living would be one of Adharma, the wrong values of utter selfishness, lust, anger, greed, jealousy and pride. He would then grow naturally to be an intelligent "animal", causing sorrow and misery to himself and to all others around him. The Rakshasas in our Puranas were of this type. Though they were intelligent and educated, their lives were moulded and guided by Adharma, that is, the wrong values. The following Sanskrit verse defines a Rakshasa :

साक्षरा विपरीताश्चेत् राक्षसा एव केवलम् ।

meaning : "When educated people become bad or misguided they

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are called Rakshasas". Even if one sees the literal meaning, when the word "सा–क्ष–रा" is reversed, then it becomes "रा–क्ष–सा".

Inspite of the so-called progress of science and civilisation with all the comforts, man round the globe is not really happy and peaceful. This state of affairs is due to his extreme selfishness born of Adharma! Hence it will be seen how Dharma is very important and necessary for man to live happily in the world. When the world was created, the Lord blessed man with Dharma—the divine way-of-life, through the scriptures, the Vedas , for the guidance and well-being of all.

Dharma is the root of the Vedas. These Vedas were received by our ancient seers, the wise Rishis and they have come down to us through the great Rishi, Bhagawan Vyasa, who divided the Vedas into four volumes. That is why he is called Veda Vyasa. The Vedas contain all that is to be known by man to make him eternally happy and perfect.

AVATARAS

With the passage of time, due to the effect of temptations, the message of the scriptures was forgotten by man and he became very Adharmic and evil minded. In this climate, the wicked prosper and the good become helpless. At such times, the Lord comes down to the earth personally, out of pity for mankind, in the form of an Avatara to protect the good, destroy the evil and re-establish Dharma firmly.

Avatara is the descent of God for ascent of man ! Lord Vishnu has taken TEN Avataras such as Matsya (Fish), Kurma (Tortoise), Varaha (Boar), Narasimha (Man-Lion), Vamana (Dwarf), Parasurama (Terrible Man), Rama (Perfect Man), Krishna (Divine), etc. The Avataras illustrate the ultimate victory of good over evil, however powerful it may appear to be at a given time. Of the avataras, Sri Ramavatara as a human and Sri Krishnavatara as divine, are very popular.

In Sri Ramavatara, Sri Rama is born as the prince of Ayodhya. He shows us how one can face the problems of life, as a human, following the path of Dharma. Sri Rama is an ideal son, brother, king and friend and dramatises the truth of the Vedic sayings :

सत्यं वद । धर्मं चर । मातृदेवो भव । पितृदेवो भव । आचार्य देवो भव । अतिथि देवो भव etc

(Speak the truth, follow and live Dharma, regard mother, father teacher and guest as God).

The Epic, that beautifully paints in simple Sanskrit poetry, Sri Rama's story and His glory, is called Srimad Ramayana. The author of the Epic is sage Valmiki, the Adi Kavi—the very first poet — and Srimad Ramayana is called Adi Kavya — the very first poem ever composed. The greatness of the poem is not only in its divine origin but also in its literary charm. It has also guided countless generations of people over the centuries.

To be continued.

THE DEADLY STING

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

By Lalogue Postvala

AMONG the spreading branches of a banyan tree lived a crow and his wife, the crow-hen. They had a cosy nest in which the crow-hen used to lay her eggs. A big black snake also lived in the hollow trunk of this banyan tree. And as soon as the crow-chicks came out of the eggs, the bad snake crawled to the nest and ate them up.

This happened time and again. Yet for all the sorrow, the poor crows did not feel like deserting their old familiar banyan and seeking another tree.

But one day, the unhappy crow-hen begged her husband "My dear, many children of ours have been eaten by that awful snake. The grief of my loved and lost ones haunts me. Let's move to some other tree."

The crow sadly replied, "We've lived in this tree a long time. We can't leave it. Somehow I'll destroy the snake. After all, might is not always necessary to defeat a strong enemy."

"How?" cried his wife. "His sting is so deadly."

"Don't you worry," comforted her husband. "I've a cunning friend. I'll consult him." He then flew to another tree under which lived his friend, the jackal.

When the jackal heard the sad story of the crow, he was very angry. He swore, "That snake will be punished, for those who are cruel and greedy meet with a bad end."

He told his friend, the crow, what to do to destroy the snake. The crow flew back to his tree, and explained the plan to his wife.

"It's rather dangerous," warned the crow. "We'll have to be very careful."

"I'll do anything to save my children, " cried the mother.

So they flew off to the nearby palace of the king of the country. In the palace garden, was a beautiful pond with shady trees around it. The crows hid themselves in a tree. The queen and her maidens were having their daily swim in

the pond. Their golden chains, other jewellery, and veils were kept at the edge of the pond.

Looking down from a safe distance, the crow-hen singled out a magnificent golden chain. She thought, "surely, this lovely necklace must belong to the queen." The mother-crow swooped down, picked up the necklace in her beak, and headed straight towards the tree where she lived.

The ladies screamed and shouted. The guards took their clubs and chased the bird. They saw it drop the chain in the hollow of a tree. One of the guards climbed the tree. As he was about to put his hand inside the hole, he saw a big black snake with a swelling hood. With one stroke of the club, the guard killed the snake and recovered the chain. The guards then returned to the palace.

Thereafter the crow and the crow-hen lived in peace in their favourite banyan tree.

RAMAYANA

The story - in short

Dr. B. P. Bagchi, Adviser to the Chinmaya Vidyalayas, has given a summary of the Ramayana. The language is so simple that even small children can understand it.

Dasaratha was a king. He ruled in Ayodhya. Rama was his son. Rama had four brothers. Sita was the name of his wife. King Dasaratha sent Rama to the forest. He went to the forest with his wife and brother Lakshmana. Ravana was a demon-king. He ruled in Lanka. He took away Sita from the forest when she was alone. Hanuman was the monkey-chief. He helped Rama with his monkeys. They fought Ravana and his followers.

In the war Ravana and his army were killed. Rama came back to Ayodhya with his wife. He ruled there as the king with Sita as his queen.

Everybody wins when we all pull together - Do a little extra.

Vijay Corporation

2nd Floor, Ideal Industrial Estate, Tulsipipe Road, Lower Parel,
Bombay 400 013

A VOYAGE TO REMEMBER

AUSTRALIA is a fascinating continent. It lies in the Southern Hemisphere. When we have our winter, it has its summer.

Vivek Erry, a tenth standard student, takes us on a voyage from the Eastern to the Western Coast of this beautiful island.

The last of the 150 tons of castor oil had been loaded on the M. V. * "Vishwa Bindu". She was all set to sail on her 25th voyage. By chance, the date was also 25th, the 25th of April 1978.

I was very excited as this was my first trip to Australia. I could hardly wait for the receiving of the pilot,* the lifting of the gangway,* the final goodbye and at last the tugs* pulling us out.

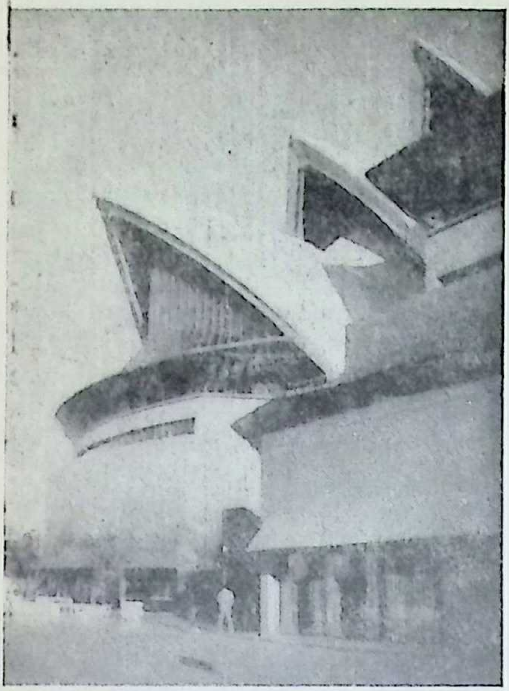
We reached Cape Wessel nearly a month later on May 23rd. We had to pick up a pilot before turning south to cross the GREAT BARRIER REEF. This is the longest coral reef * in the world, extending a thousand miles along the coast of Queensland. Its distance from the coast varies from 5 to 150 miles. It looks like a series of oval shaped patches clustered* together. However, there are clear openings, which are used by ships as short-cuts to the coast. As this is a tricky passage, we had to hire the services of a pilot.

We passed quite close to some coral islands. The water was a mixture of lovely shades of green, blue and yellow because of the reef. Five days later, we reached Brisbane, the capital of Queensland. There we saw the Lone Pine Sanctuary,* the largest Koala bear* sanctuary in Australia. We reached it after a pleasant 20-minute drive along the banks of the River Brisbane. Besides Koala bears, we saw emus* kangaroos,* wallabies*, dingoes,* guinea pigs, a duck-billed platypus* and monstrous looking three-foot lizards.

From there, we sailed to Sydney. After a two-day journey, we could see lights on the horizon in the early morning light. We had reached. The weather was bitterly cold, but we stood on the bridge—keen to see the ship enter the harbour. As the ship turned slowly, the whole of Sydney harbour, perhaps the most beautiful one in the world came into view.

The Opera House looked like a huge bird, glittering in the morning sun. The building consists of shell-shaped parts. It was built at the enormous cost of $102 million (more than Rs. 900 million), over a period of 20 years. It stands on Bennelong Point, a peninsula of nearly 5½ acres.

After the site was selected, an international competition was held for a design for the complex. The winner was a Danish architect*, Jorn Utzon.



A view of the Opera House in Sydney.

The sky scrapers behind the Opera House looked as if they were reaching upto the sky. The Sydney Harbour Bridge looked imposing and magnificent. Sydney proved to be the most exciting city. Besides the Opera House, we saw the zoo, the museum, the various parks and the Rocks. We visited the famous Argyle Cut, where there was once a huge boulder which was cut by the early settlers. The Rocks were selected for settlement because close to them there was fresh water and fertile land. This area, four miles inland, was named Sydney Cove. We saw Sydney's oldest dwelling (Cadmans Cottage), its shortest street and its oldest hotel which were all built on the Rocks.

After ten days, we left for Adelaide, a thousand miles from Sydney. The city is beautifully laid out within one square mile of Victoria Square, the centre point of Adelaide.

It was once known as the "City of churches" as there are churches at almost every street corner. But today Adelaide is a mixture of the old and the new. It has multi-storied office blocks contrasting with colonial architecture. Paddling down the River Torrens in the heart of Adelaide, one feels cut off from civilisation. However not more than fifty yards away are Adelaide's busiest streets and departmental stores! Adelaide has Australia's largest undercover aquarium (Marineland). The performing dolphins, seals and other marine animals are a delight to watch.

Twelve days later, we reached Melbourne. It was very cold, the temperature varying between 12 to 18 degrees centigrade. In the early morning, thick fog covered the city But there were a few sunny days when Melbourne looked beautiful. On the lush green banks of the River Yarra were weeping willows bending over its muddy waters. We saw the Melbourne cricket grounds where Bedi and his team had played just six months earlier.

I was dreading passing through THE GREAT AUSTRALIAN BIGHT* which extends from Melbourne to Fremantle. The sea here (the Southern ocean) is very rough because of the powerful Westerly winds rushing into the low pressure belts. For the last three days of our five-day trip there was constant rolling and pitching and I was seasick.

THE FIRST FLEET

In 1783, Britain lost her American Colonies, and was faced with many problems. One of these was what to do with her convicts. By 1786, the situation became critical and the government decided to act. It was then officially decided that Australia would be converted into a convict colony. So about 200 years ago in the afternoon of January 26, 1788, the "First Fleet" arrived in Port Jackson. Besides carrying 1044 people, it also brought supplies and clothing for two years. Captain Phillip led a party of officers and marines ashore in Sydney Cove. Later that day, the rest of the fleet arrived and next morning the work of creating a settlement began in earnest. Trees near the freshwater stream were cut, tents were erected, land was cleared for growing grain and vegetables. And life began in the now 200 year-old colony.

Twenty two miles inward from Fremantle on the Swan river lies the city of Perth. There is nothing to match its planning, its highways and buildings. Although it is the capital of Western Australia, it has a population of only 8½ lakhs. The people here are much more friendly and helpful than those in the rest of Australia.

On July 7, at ten o'clock we left the Australian continent, forever perhaps. Four hundred and fifty miles away from Perth we saw the last of the Australian coast as the ship headed north.

* M. V. — Motor vessel
* pilot — a person who steers ships.
* gangway — a flat plank for boarding or leaving a ship.
* tugs — small, powerful boats.
* coral reef — a ridge of corals (hard skeletons of certain sea animals).
* cluster — bunch.
* sanctuary — place where wild life is preserved from hunters.
* Koala bear — a furry, tailless, grey animal.
* emus — large, flightless birds.
* kangaroos — animals having a small head, short forelimbs, powerful hind legs used for leaping and a long, thick tail serving as a support and balance.
* wallabies — small and medium sized kangaroos.
* dingoes — wolf—like, wild dogs.
* duck-billed platypus — a small water animal having webbed feet and a bill like that of a duck.
* architect — a person who designs buildings.
* bight — a bay or gulf
* convicts — prisoners.

THE NOD !

ONCE a physician was going on a journey. He met four women on the way. Nodding slightly, he walked on.

As soon as he was out of earshot, the four women began to quarrel about whom he had nodded to. Every woman claimed she was fit for the salute and he had saluted her only.

One of them said, "The gentleman has not gone far; let us ask him. Why should we quarrel amongst ourselves?"

At last the four women met the man who was walking fast, "O traveller, tell us whom did you salute amongst us?"

The physician said, "Unless you tell me your names and your jobs, I can't give a proper reply. So tell me your names first".

One of them said, "My name is Wealth. All glories and comfort rest on me." The physician said, "True, but you were never faithful to anybody. So I do not think it necessary to salute you".

The second woman said, "My name is Beauty. In this world all desire me—the rich and the poor." The physician said, "You are variable and inconsistent. I therefore don't think you fit for a salute.

The third said, "My name is Wisdom. Every system in the world depends upon me." The physician said, "You often do not help the man in time, and appear only after the crisis is over. I, therefore do not wish to salute you".

The fourth said, "My name is Fate. The world may change but I never change when I make up my mind." The physician said, "Beyond doubt, you deserve a salute and I salute you".

By Bishan Swaroop Aggarwal

"NOW AND HERE"

The mother says -
Do it now,
postpone it never!
The teacher tells -
Do it today - tomorrow
shall not come ever!
The friends say -
Why bother today
let us enjoy and play!
The Scriptures declare -
'Act Now and Here,
leave the rest
for Him to care'!

Confused and undecided, I think
over and over again
With a restless mind
the right path nowhere I find!
Silently, I pray -
'Oh, Lord, enlighten me,
A deluded fool of mud and clay'!

The Mind quietens, Intellect guides,
'Act Now and Here
and leave the rest
for Him to care!'
So I realise and decide -
This is what
I have to do
NOW AND HERE!

By R. L. Chopra

The following play can be staged in our Nursery schools and Bala Vihar (junior) classes. It is written by Mrs. Vasanti Jayaswal, our Bala Vihar Sevika in Los Angeles. She produced it one evening at the Humbolt spiritual camp.

—Swami Chinmayananda.

FEAR OF THE UNKNOWN

Animal characters could use masks. Sound effects can be made by the students themselves. Props such as the gates and trees may be made. The whole play may be acted on the stage in one scene, using different areas for action.

CHARACTERS

Narrator
King Siddha
Bhiku — a young boy
Gopal — a potter
Kamala — a gopi
Animals of the forest — bird, fox, monkey, rabbit, etc.
Dhenu — a friendly cow
Bhiku's friends.

King Siddha : Bhiku, come here! Bring me my hookah.

Bhiku : Yes, your Majesty.
(Bhiku brings the hookah to the King and stands in obedience).

Narrator : Bhiku was the pipe bearer for King Siddha of Kerapur.

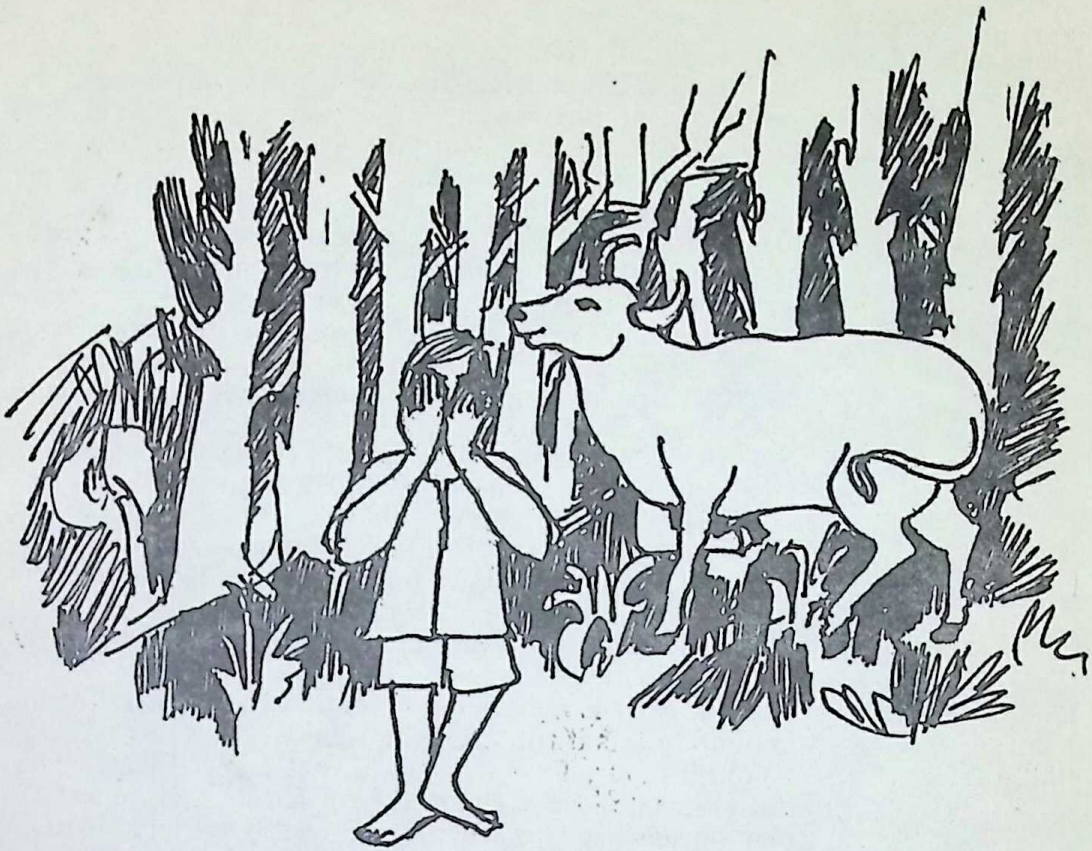
He was a bright and honest child. He lived with his mother Kamala who churned butter all day long, so she could sell it at the market place.

His father, Gopal was a potter who worked with magical speed at his potter's wheel and turned out beautiful pots of all shapes and sizes.

Bhiku and his family lived in a little hut in the corner of the huge palace garden. Every day Bhiku would take care of their cow, the friendly Dhenu. He saw to it that she had plenty of food to eat and often patted her head lovingly.

Bhiku took Dhenu to different parts of the garden in search of fresh grass to eat. He never took her beyond the palace gates. King Siddha had ordered his subjects not to venture into the thick overgrown forest. Who knew what unknown threats lurked there?

One day Bhiku wandered along with Dhenu near the bushes by the palace gates. He gazed at the blue skies and the fleecy clouds that dotted the horizon. Slowly he went right past the open palace gates. Not until he was in the midst of the thicket did he realise quite suddenly that he was right in the middle of the forbidden forest. Bhiku was scared of the UNKNOWN.



He heard slithering noises from the leaves below, weird shrieks and howls from the tree tops .....That was enough! He shut his eyes tight with fear; the UNKNOWN was not to be looked at.

As he stood there shivering, he felt something soft. A beautiful bird with multicoloured feathers flew from the trees, circled him and piped, "It's only us, it's only us." Soon a lively monkey came prancing along and said "It's only us, it's only us." The sly fox nuzzled his snout against Bhiku's legs and he said, "It's only us, it's only us." The little white rabbit hopped around Bhiku shouting, "It's only us, it's only us."

Surrounded by the prancing animals, Bhiku danced with glee. He prodded Dhenu with his stick and shouted "It's only them, it's only them and they are our friends. Come Dhenu, let's go and tell my folks the good news." Bhiku ran eagerly to his mother who was just returning from the market.

Bhiku	:	"Mother, Mother, do you know where I went today?"
Kamala	:	"Where did you go, my son?"
Bhiku	:	"I went to the forest, Ma".
Kamala	:	"Oh no, not the forbidden forest!"
Bhiku	:	"Yes Ma, that very same one. Don't worry! See! Nothing bad happened to me. The forest is full of animals that are beautiful and kind."

Kamala : "Let's go tell your father about this great news!" Bhiku, Dhenu and Kamala ran to the hut where the potter was still at work.

Kamala : "Guess what happened to your son today?"

Gopal : "What did he do this time?"

Bhiku : "Dad, I went to the forest today."

Gopal : "Have I not told you never to leave the palace gates?"

Bhiku : "But father listen to me. Only they live in the forest, the animals. They are friendly too!"

Gopal : "In that case, we better tell the king all about your adventures."

Bhiku, Kamala, Gopal and Dhenu made their way to the King's chambers.

Bhiku : (on seeing his friends pass by) : "Hey you, come here Guess where I have been with Dhenu today?"

Friends : "Now Bhiku, where did you go without telling us?"

Bhiku : "I have been to the forbidden forest. And none of you will believe me that there are friendly animals in there. You have to see for yourself to believe me."

All the people enter the King's presence and bow low to him.

King Siddha : "Bhiku, what is all this nonsense that I have been hearing about you? Is it true that you went to the forest today?"

Bhiku : "Your honour, I am sorry to have disobeyed your order, but I became lost in the beauty of nature and quite accidentally chanced to enter the forest. Don't be mad at me, Sir. In this forest only animals live, kind and beautiful ones. It's only them!"

Siddha : "Is this really true? Well, what kind of animals are they?"

Bhiku : "There are birds, monkeys, foxes and rabbits."

Siddha : "Although you disobeyed me, I shall reward you with a platter full of gold coins. Here take this and now leave the palace. Go tell all the people of the village that the forest is no longer a forbidden place. Share this great discovery with one and all."

Everyone wins when we have a little more consideration–Forget ourselves first.

Polyplastics Corporation

105–106, A—Z Industrial Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Bombay 400 013.

SRI RAMAKRISHNA

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Renuka Neogi

HE developed the greatest love and respect for this man. Later on he became his main disciple and was known to the world as Swami Vivekananda who spread his Guru's teachings far and wide.

In the year 1882, many devotees started coming to him; they were young and old, men and women. One of them was Mahendranath Gupta, a headmaster in a school. He visited him regularly and loved to hear the master talk to those assembled. He made a mental note of all he had seen and heard and later on put it in writing in the form of the great book "Gospel of Sri Ramakrishna." Sri Ramakrishna taught the highest truths through beautiful stories and parables and homely illustrations. He taught that if we want to go near God, we should constantly remember him even while carrying out ordinary duties. Day in and day out, people poured in, seeking his advice and blessings; he disappointed none. A band of devotees gathered around him and served him. At this time, he was suffering from pain in his throat and it went on increasing. On New Year's day of 1886, when he felt a little better, he came out of his room and took a walk in the garden. Girish Ghosh, Ram and others gathered around him. In a divine mood, he said "I bless you all, be illumined". This was an experience so wonderful that it brought about a complete change in their lives, and this event is celebrated even to this day every new year.

The master inspired his young disciples with noble thoughts and ideas. He told them that lust and greed were bad and one must get rid of them to get pure knowledge of God through renunciation and devotion. Narendra was full of this spirit and he told his young brother disciples about the grandeur of such an ideal. Sri Ramakrishna found him very worthy and entrusted him with the task of looking after them. They were formally

initiated into sanyasa, and the order of Sri Ramakrishna was founded.

Sri Ramakrishna had cancer of the throat. His condition worsened day by day and no treatment gave him any relief. The time had come for his departure. He called his chief disciple to his bedside. After gazing at him, he went into samadhi. Narendra felt some force like an electric shock enter his body, but remained lost to the outer world for some time. When they became conscious again, he said, "Naren, today I have given you my all, I have become a fakir. With this power I have given you, you will do great good to the world. Only when you have completed your work will you leave this world."

The end was drawing near; the disciples were filled with sorrow and wanted him to ask the Divine Mother to cure him. But this he refused saying "To ask the Mother of the universe to cure this body? I can't say such things to Her." One day Narendra was sitting near him and entertaining doubts regarding his being an incarnation. At once Sri Ramakrishna sensed this and with all his strength, spoke in a clear voice. "Well Naren, don't you believe even now? He who was Rama and he who was Krishna, is now Ramakrishna in this body". Narendra hung his head in shame for having doubts even after so many revelations.

On the midnight of 15th August, Sri Ramakrishna uttered the name of Kali thrice and passed away. All wept bitterly and at the same time felt that though he had cast off his physical body, he would live with them forever. They raised the shout of "Jai Bhagawan Ramakrishna"

This divine soul came in human form in our midst at a very critical time in our history when our religion was in danger. He revived and recharged Hinduism.

Concluded.

GIFTS FOR YOU

As a part of the celebrations of the International Year of the Child, we are offering an autographed picture of Swami Chinmayanandaji to all those who subscribe on or after 1st April 1979.

All those who have subscribed before need not be disappointed. We are giving you an opportunity to get this picture too. All you have to do is get five new subscribers for Bal Vihar. Those who collect 25 subscriptions will receive a beautiful box of 12 Japanese pencils as well as the photograph.

Since your holidays will soon be here, there will be plenty of time for you to find subscribers and to win these wonderful gifts.

Everyone wins when we show appreciation - Give a little credit.

M/s. Balco

Unit No. 107, 1st Floor, A-Z Industrial Estate, Fergusson Road, Bombay-400 013.

THINK!

Lord! Remind me not to put off till tomorrow what I should have done day before yesterday.

—*Swami Chinmayananda*

This is the thought for the month. Very often time "slips through our fingers" because we postpone things till it's too late.

Based on the thought for the month, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "Surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Bal Vihar. So think and send in your entry today!

* * *

The following poem is dedicated to Swamiji by a yound devotee:-

Surrender

He came in His flaming
robes of ochre
He sat down and radiated
the smile -
the smile that melted me in
the ocean of compassion and
wisdom that He is
He told of the mystical
Truth of which we know not
and then I saw
And after seeing, I placed my tiny
head on His lotus feet of wisdom and
said
I am you.

By Anuradha (17 *years*)

WORD BANK

By Anita Roslind (13 *years*)

Given below are a few words with one or more letters missing. But all the words end with 'ART'. How many blanks can you fill in ?

1) .....ART : A person who has risen suddenly from a humble position.
2) .....ART : Fruit pie; piece of pastry with jam
3) .....ART : Well dressed; bright.
4) .....ART : Make sudden involuntary movement due to surprise.
5) .....ART : Go away.
6) .....ART : Separately.
7) .....ART : A sheet of tabulated or diagrammatic information.

Answers on page no. 24

THE TWO BUCKETS

Once upon a time, there were two buckets. One bucket told the other that no matter how many times I come out of the well full, I always go down empty. The other bucket said that no matter how many times I go down empty, I always come up full.

By Maruvada Venkat Satish

Everybody wins when we are a little less negative - Be more positive.

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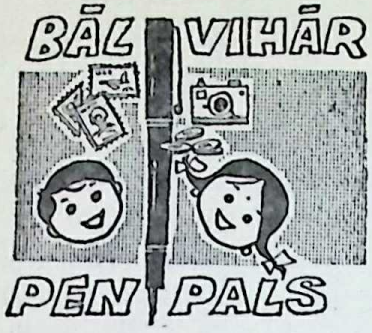

313/79 Soni C. Raisinghani
(12 years)
C/o C. R. Raisinghani
Advocate High Court
491/A, Ulhasnagar-2
Dt. Thane (Maharashtra).

314/79 Mahadevi B. Kasturi
(13 years)
Sardar Nagar III
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Hobbies: Reading story books, painting, collecting stamps, gardening, playing badminton and cricket.

315/79 G. Jai Shanker
(11 years)
No. 18, Tiruvalluvar Street
Ramana Nagar
Perambur
Madras - 600 011.

Hobbies : Collecting stamps, stickers, labels, and playing cricket.

ANSWERS TO PICTURE QUIZ PAGE NO. 10

1. Rugby
2. Billiards
3. Football
4. Tennis
5. Basketball
6. Boxing
7. Hockey

ANSWERS TO WORD BANK ON PAGE NO 23

1. UPSTART
2. TART
3. SMART
4. START
5. DEPART
6. APART
7. CHART

RIDDLES

1. Which room is never swept?
2. Which table does not have a leg to stand on?
3. What has a mouth, yet never eats; has no feet yet always runs; and has a bed but never sleeps?
4. What is it that speaks every language?

By Sobha K. Nair (13 *years*)

Answers on page no. 34

Please Note

Payments for the subscriptions or their renewals or advertisements should be made in the name of Central Chinmaya Mission Trust and not in the name of Bal Vihar.

Everybody wins when we are a little less critical-Be constructive and more helpful.

Indira Construction Private Limited

6, Oak Lane, Fort, Bombay-400 001.

A SLAVE OF TIME

By Bela Pandit

Mr. Madaswamy is a middle-aged man who lives next door. Even though he is married and has three kids, he lives like a bachelor. His wife and children live in their home town.

Mr. Swamy, as most of his neighbours know him, cooks his own food and keeps his house spotlessly clean. One can hardly come across a man, who takes such deep interest in domestic work and that too when his wife is not around.

This apart, what makes him different is that his routine runs almost round the clock. He gets up early in the morning, has his morning tea, cooks his food, has his bath and devotes about one hour to his prayers. By about 8 o'clock, he finishes everything and is ready to leave his house for his office.

One day, it so happened that inspite of doing things in a hurry, he found that he had extra time at his disposal. "HOW COULD THIS HAVE HAPPENED?", he wondered. He peeped out through his window and saw that his neighbours were still snoring. Mr. Swamy started wondering whether he had missed doing something. No, he thought, "I have taken my bath, completed my prayers and everything else".

"Maybe the sun is late in rising today, but then why should I wait? I must catch my 8.20 fast train," he said to himself.

As he walked along the street, he found that the street seemed deserted; even the hawkers had not put up their stalls. His confusion increased when he boarded an empty train. He thought, "maybe the people have gone on strike." Mr. Swamy took his newspaper and started reading it. "Nothing new", he muttered and kept it aside.

When he reached his office, that too was closed. "Something is seriously wrong. I must find out what the matter is". He went to the nearest telephone booth and dialled the police. "Hello", "Hello," he said, the moment he heard the voice from the other end. He then started relating the series of events - "Trains are empty, offices closed, there's nobody on the streets. What's the matter?", he almost screamed out of fear.

The voice from the other end laughed loudly and said, "It's a Sunday." He had forgotten to change the date on his calendar.

Everybody wins when we hate the sin - Love the sinner.

Shri Govindabhai K. Raja

68/F Napean Sea Road, Suvas Apartments, 4th Floor, Bombay—400 006.

Smart Alec

"What makes you say that he is an ape?"

"Because an ape escaped from a circus last week and this guy was captured three times by mistake."

* * *

The young lady walked boldly to a woman whom she thought to be the superintendent of the hospital, asking "May I see Captain Mathur please?"

"May I ask who you are?"

"Certainly, I am his sister."

"Very well" she replied "I am glad to meet you, I am his mother."

* * *

Professor : "Can you tell me anything common about the great scientists of the 16th century?"

Student : "They are all dead, Sir."

* * *

Magistrate : "I don't expect to see you here again."

Offender : "Are you going to retire, Sir?"

* * *

Teacher : "Why is a snake clever?"
"Because you can't pull it's leg."

* * *

Boss : "Has the cashier told you what to do this afternoon?"

Peon : "Yes sir! I have to wake him up when I see you coming."

* * *

Diner : "This won't do. That man over there has more to eat than I do. Where is the manager?"

Waiter : "That is the manager, sir."

* * *

Jimmy : "Ma, when we have company for dinner tonight, have I got to eat my apple pie with a fork."

Mother : "Yes, certainly my dear!"

Jimmy : "Well, have you got enough apple pie so I can practise before they come?"

By Sudhir Baliga

A harassed mother heard her younger son crying and called to her older son : "Deepak! What's your brother crying about ? Didn't I tell you to give him any thing he wanted?"

Deepak : "Yes, mummy, but now that I have dug him a hole he wants me to bring it into the house."

By Bhairav B.

ALONE - NOT LONELY

SWAMIJI replies to a young devotee's letter. The letter has been selected as the questions asked were very interesting.

Dated : 3rd July 1970.

Kum. Shobha,
Jamshedpur.

Blessed self,

Om! Om! Om!
Salutations.

Your beautiful letter, so nicely written in Hindi, was enjoyed by me immensely. I could feel your love gushing out through the lines. You have asked me three questions. Really speaking, I do not know how to answer them as you are such a little child. However, I will try to give you my views.

1. Why did you become a Swamiji?

From my childhood, I was in a home where my parents and members of the family were very, very religious. They used to tell me the beautiful stories of our Puranas and I started admiring the courageous heroism of Rama, the love and beauty of Krishna, the devotion of Hanuman, the love of Radha and the Gopies, the daring of Druva, the charm of Prahalad and so on. However, as I reached the higher classes, study became more important than religion and when I reached college, I felt that all these were mere stories with no meaning. I wanted to clear my doubts and there was none to explain them to me. (You children are very lucky as in the Bala Vihar Class all your doubts are cleared for you).

After my passing out of college, for a short time I entered politics — and yet, I felt that I was not getting the joy and satisfaction my heart was craving for. The little joys of life are to be purchased at the tremendous cost of effort, worry and sorrow, and even these little joys when actually realised, never contained the charm that I expected. In short, life as I was living then was proving a disappointment. This forced me to take a long vacation to read and study our great books by myself. My understanding increased and I felt that I must become a full-time student of religion. In order to become full time students, we need a teacher and therefore I approached my Guru. As I started studying, I felt that I must dedicate my life

to spreading this knowledge to children like you and to all the people of the world. Sanyas means a uniform taken by an individual who has dedicated himself to the service of all throughout his life. This is how I think I took Sanyas.

II. Do you like a lonely life?

Dear Shobha, I am never lonely; I try to live alone. Do you understand the difference? Once when I was in college, a very rich man gave me the key of his house which is built upon a hillock and it was the only house for miles around. The rich man and his family were going somewhere and they gave me the key so that I may go and stay there for preparing for my examination. I was happy. I moved to that house. Till evening, it was all wonderful. By evening, the gardener went away. The servant had already taken my permission to visit his children in the neighbouring village. In that big house with no one near about for a mile around, I felt very unhappy as I was feeling lonely.

Later on, when I was in Uttar Kashi, I was in my Kutia, **all alone** with no one near and yet I was not afraid nor was I feeling unhappy. **When you are alone, you are alone with the Lord. When your thoughts are not with the Lord, you will feel lonely.**

No human being would like to be lonely. Loneliness is sorrowful—painful. But to be alone with Lord Krishna in your thoughts is the ideal way to live. To be a Sanyasi means to live alone with the Lord as your heart's companion.

III. Can I also become a Swami?

Shobha, you can become a woman and not a man—never. Similarly, you can never become a Swami, but you can become a Swamini. But it is not necessary. Those who have full faith in the Lord and constant devotion to him are all really great souls (Mahatmas). If, as you grow, you want to dedicate your life to serve the world by bringing the stories of the Lord into the hearts of the people, then you must become a Swamini otherwise it is not necessary.

You need not have a police uniform to help a blind man across the road or to save a child who is running into the traffic. But if you want to stand at the crossroads for hours together to direct the traffic, you must have a uniform or else people will consider you a madman. To live a godly life, devoting time to the service of the Lord, you need not become a Swamini. But if as the traffic constable, you want to serve all people at all times till you die, caring nothing for yourself, then it is better that you have a Shankara's uniform—the Garuva Saree !

"ASHA, put your toys inside; we are having some visitors soon", said Mrs. Rao.

"Yes, Mummy, I'll put them in as soon as I finish reading this book", replied Asha.

She never did; it was Mrs. Rao who put away her toys in the end.

"Rohan, here is your pencil lying in the verandah, take it inside," called Mrs. Rao.

"Coming Mummy, you leave it there, I'll get it," replied Rohan.

Rohan and Asha never did things as soon as they were told; they always kept putting things off, and in the end their mother did it for them.

"Hospital, whatever happened?," wondered Asha "Rohan come on, let's go."

They ran as fast as they could. When they reached home, they found their neighbour, Mrs. Pundit, waiting for them. "Come over to my house, there is nothing to be scared of. Your mother slipped and fell down and fractured her leg. So she had to go to the hospital for a plaster."

"Where did she fall?" asked Asha.

"Oh, in the passage leading towards the drawing room. Luckily the telephone was close by so she rang me up", replied Mrs. Pundit. "Oh Rohan, Mummy must have

IT'S OUR FAULT

By Chitra Rao

One evening, Asha was coming towards the drawing room, carrying a glass of water, when Rohan came around the corner and banged into her. The water splashed all over the place. "Look, what you've done Rohan, now you swob it!" cried Asha angrily.

"Swob it" replied Rohan, "why should I? You were in my way; you swob it."

So in the end, neither Rohan nor Asha swobbed it and they both went out to play. Soon a friend of theirs called out to them. "Asha, Rohan, go home, your mother's taken to the hospital."

slipped on the water we had spilt; it's all our fault," said Asha, beginning to cry. Just then, their father came home from the office. Both the children ran to tell him what had happened. "It's our fault Daddy. We spilt some water and did not swob it. Mummy must have slipped there," said Rohan looking miserable.

Mr. Rao went up to Mrs. Pundit to ask which hospital his wife had been taken to. Then he took the children and went there. They found that Mrs. Rao was inside, getting her leg plastered.

Everybody wins when we develop our own confidence - Control our conceit.

Jolly & Maker

Maker Bhavan No. 2, New Marine Lines, Bombay – 400 020.

A HUNGRY DOG WILL FOLLOW YOU

ONE day the prince of Gajwar lost his way in a forest and luck delivered him in the hands of the king of Sthilampur. The king treated him well and allowed him to stay as a guest in his palace. The prince thanked him. In the morning, the prince was shown around the palace and the neighbourhood by the king. The prince sang the praises of the king. In the evening the prince asked him, "How have you kept such a large and strong army so orderly"?

The proud and flattered king replied "I will tell you my secret. If you keep a dog hungry, it will always follow you." The prince thanked the king for letting him into his secret and after thanking him, he left the palace on horseback for his own country.

A few months later, the king found that his army had deserted him. Very soon his country was attacked and captured. The king was put under arrest. When the king came to know that the invader was the same prince, he was greatly surprised. The king asked the prince, "How did you take over my army?"

The prince replied, "When I was returning from your palace, I saw a very hungry dog following his master. When I offered it a piece of bread, he immediately left his master and followed me. That put an idea into my mind and I offered your soldiers riches and pleasures if they would leave you and come over to my side."

By Sarabjeet Singh Baweja
(14 years)

Contd. from page no. 31

Asha prayed "God, please make Mummy alright, I'll never disobey her again, I'll always do the things she tells me to."

Rohan too had made up his mind to do things as soon as he was told.

Soon the doctor came out and said they could take her home. Both the children rushed in to see their mother, "Mummy we are very sorry we never swobbed the floor, we promise we'll do things as soon as we are told," they said breathlessly.

"O. K., O. K., now let's go home, you'll have to do the house work for some time Asha, and Rohan can help you," said Mrs. Rao.

The children worked hard, and did all that their mother told them to do, and soon their mother was well enough to do things on her own

Everybody wins when we are modest about our achievements - Be happy about the success of others.

International Chemicals

Dadabhai Phalkey Road, Dadar, Bombay-400 014.

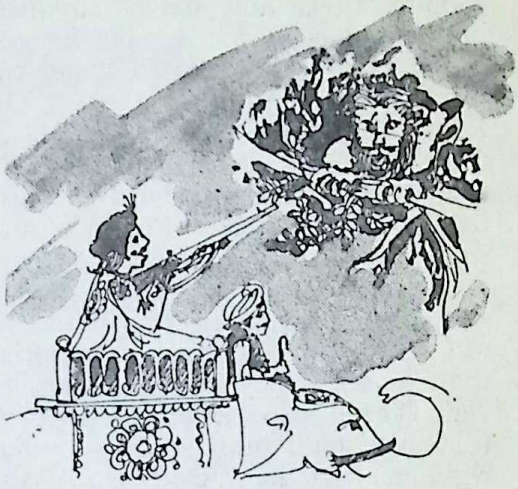
HE MET HIS MATCH

By Vinita

NOT very long ago, there was a ferocious lion in one of the jungles of the Himalayas. His den was right next to the river that was flowing through the jungle. He would not allow any of the animals living in the jungle to come anywhere near the river. Those that dared to come near the river were not spared their lives. The poor little animals were so frightened of him that they would rather walk for miles through the jungle to the other end of the river, than to face the fury of the lion.

One day, a Raja riding on his elephant, came for shikar to the jungle where this lion lived. He had been travelling many miles before he reached the jungle. His supply of water was finished and he was extremely thirsty. He headed straight for the river so that he could have a drink of its cool and refreshing water. Barely had he reached the banks of the river when the lion came running and roared loudly, "Why have you come to my jungle? I will kill you and eat you up!"

Now, the Raja was a very brave person. He was not easily frightened of the lion's loud roar. He faced the lion, and pushing his chest out, said "Do you know who I am? I am a Raja — I shoot all those who question me or dare to stand in my path. I give you one chance—if you do not go away quietly, I will shoot you!"



The lion did not know that he had met his match. He climbed a tree and getting ready to pounce on the Raja, said "I don't care who you are. I am going to kill you and eat you up." This was more than the Raja could tolerate. He swiftly drew his gun, but being a kind man, instead of killing the lion, only shot him in the leg to frighten him. The poor lion had never been challenged before—he was stunned! Then suddenly he saw blood trickling down his leg—a sight he had never seen! He began to cry and begged the Raja to forgive him and to take him to a doctor.

The kind Raja took pity on the lion and took him to his own palace so that his personal doctor could look after him. The Raja's

doctor bandaged the lion's leg and looked after him till he was well again. The lion loved the Raja for this act of kindness. He had also begun to enjoy the company of the elephants, horses, camels, rabbits, dogs and cats that lived in the palace gardens. He begged the Raja to allow him to spend the rest of his days with them. The Raja had also grown fond of this silly lion who had tried to act so tough. He allowed the lion to live in his palace gardens and they all became good friends.

The other animals in the jungle were also pleased to be rid of the ferocious lion who used to terrorise them. Now they did not have to walk for miles to quench their thirst, for they had built their homes right next to the vacant den of the lion!

If I were a teacher.....

If I were a teacher
I would be a preacher.
I would teach the children well
And save them from going to hell

By Mitali Sethi (11 *years*)

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES on Page no. 24

1. A mushroom
2. A timetable
3. A river
4. An echo.

TO BE THE KING !

By Narender Madnani
(*9 years*)

ONCE upon a time, there was a king who was very kind and noble. He loved all the people. The king also took great care of the animals and trees.

One day, the king called his messengers to make an announcement throughout his country that on his 50th birthday, everybody could choose and get one thing. So the messengers announced that the king was going to have a bazar on Sunday. Hearing this, the people were very, very happy, and wondering what to choose. On Sunday morning, the bazar was opened and the people came. Some old men took walking sticks. Some of the ladies took jewels, handbags and perfumes. The children took toys and assorted candies and some men took shirts. Only one man took nothing. He looked all around the bazar, then he sat down because he was tired. After some time, the man inquired about the king and he put his hand on the king's shoulder.

The king asked "What do you want?"

The man answered politely "I would like to be king - the owner of all the things like you".

The king was pleased to hear this. He took off his crown and handed over his responsibility. He blessed the man and the people in his country. He then retired to the jungle to spend his time thinking about God.

BHARAT DARSHAN

TIRUCHENDUR

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

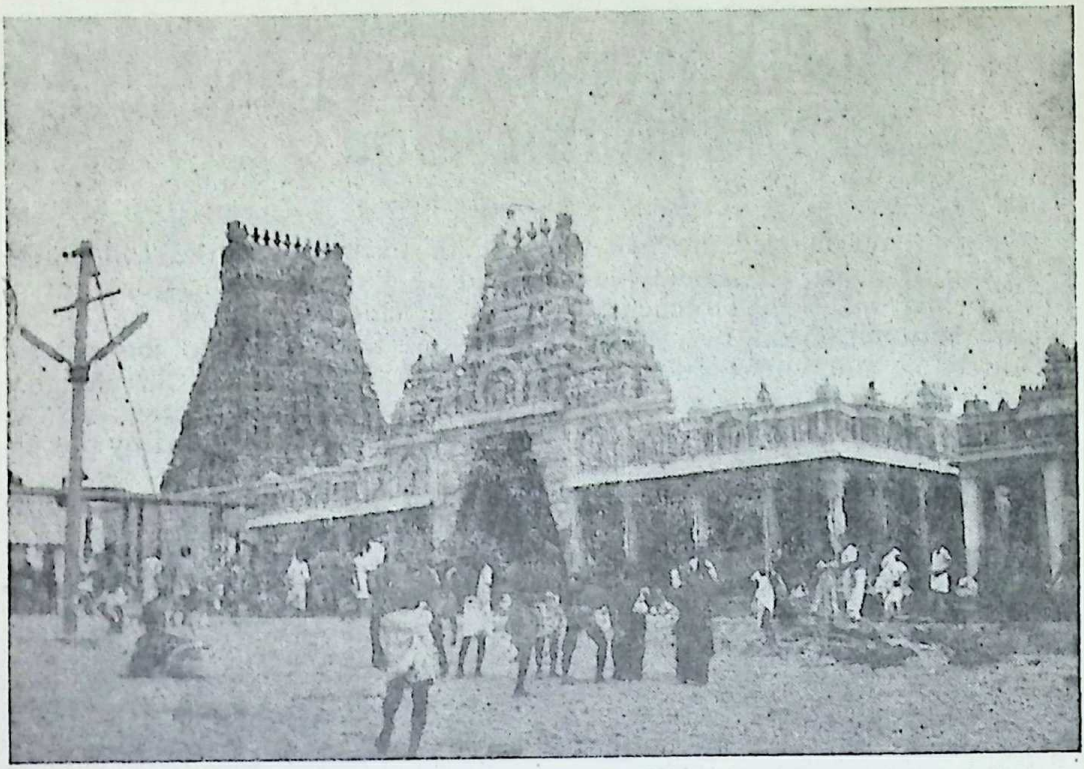
I hope you enjoyed the visit to Kanyakumari. The next place of our pilgrimage is Tiruchendur. We travel about 75 km. in a northerly direction along the sea-shore... and we are in this temple city. We have chosen to be here on the day of an important festival, 'Skanda-Shasti' which falls on the sixth day after Diwali every year.

Let us go to the sea-shore adjoining the temple. Thousands of devotees have gathered here to witness the enactment of the battle that took place long ago, between Lord Subramanya and the leader of Asuras, Surapadma. The roaring waves of the Bay of Bengal seem to join hands with the rejoicing devotees on the sea-shore.

To our left is the temple. In front of us, the colourfully dressed, surging crowd is awaiting the great event. From the mantap in the north, Lord Subramanya is emerging, majestically seated on his peacock. From the south, Surapadma is marching, filled with the pride of his victories. A fierce battle takes place. Look there... it looks as if the Asura is going to surrender ... he sees the divinity of his opponent. But he is shaking his head and seems to be saying to himself "no...no". He dashes forward to deliver the final blow. Subramanya throws the 'Vel' (mace) and Surapadma is killed. The devotees are thrilled with the victory of the Lord over the evil forces and they are moving forward to get a closer view of the victor.

Now, let us turn to the avatara of Subramanya, or Shanmugha. The Devas were suffering at the hands of the demons, led by powerful Surapadma and his brothers. They appealed to Lord Siva for relief. Then a miracle happened. Six sparks of fire emerged out of the 'third eye' of Siva. They were received by Agni (God of fire) and Vayu (God of Air) and taken to the Ganges. From there, they were deposited in the sacred Himalayan "Saravana Lake". In the lake, they became six babies who were taken care of by six Kartika nymphs. One day Siva and Parvati went to the lake. Enchanted by these children, Parvati embraced them. Immediately the six-children became one child, with six heads and twelve hands. He was called "Shanmugha", the six-faced one. When he grew up, he was appointed as the General of the army of the Devas and hence his title "Deva-Senapati".

From Kailas, Shanmugha came to the south with his army, to fight Surapadma. He camped at Tiruchendur, as Surapadma's capital was in the Mahendra island in the Bay of Bengal. According to the rules of war, Shanmugha sent his general Virabahu, to Mahendragiri, to sue for peace but the offer



A view of the tower of the Temple at Tiruchendur

Photo by Mr. Chockalingam

was spurned. Fighting began and in five days, the entire army of Surapadma and his brothers were killed by Virabahu and his warriors. Surapadma alone survived. On the sixth day, Subramanya met him on the battle field. Anxious to win him over, Subramanya revealed His 'Visvarupa'.

That had only a momentary effect on Surapadma. In the fierce fighting that followed, Subramanya released His 'Vel' (mace), which searched for the powerful demon, who had taken the shape of a gigantic mango tree with its roots above the sea and the branches in the sea. The 'Vel' split the tree into two and they became a cock and peacock. Subramanya, with a gracious smile, accepted the peacock as his permanent 'Vahana' and gave a place to the cock in his banner. The imprisoned Devas were released and the victory was celebrated. For this reason, Tiruchendur was also known as Jayanthipuram, "City of Victory".

It is this immortal event that is celebrated as "Skanda-Shasti" festival. Skanda is another name of Subramanya. Shasti is the sixth day of the waxing moon in October - November. Devotees observe strict fast on these six days and after witnessing the victorious battle, they break their fast.

Think !

True loving is not a passive 'taking' but a dynamic "giving".
Swami Chinmayananda.

Just as we can give or receive gifts, similarly we can give or receive love.

However true loving means actively giving love to others rather than waiting for them "to make the first move". This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Bal Vihar. The last date for sending in entries is June 15th. So send in your entry soon!

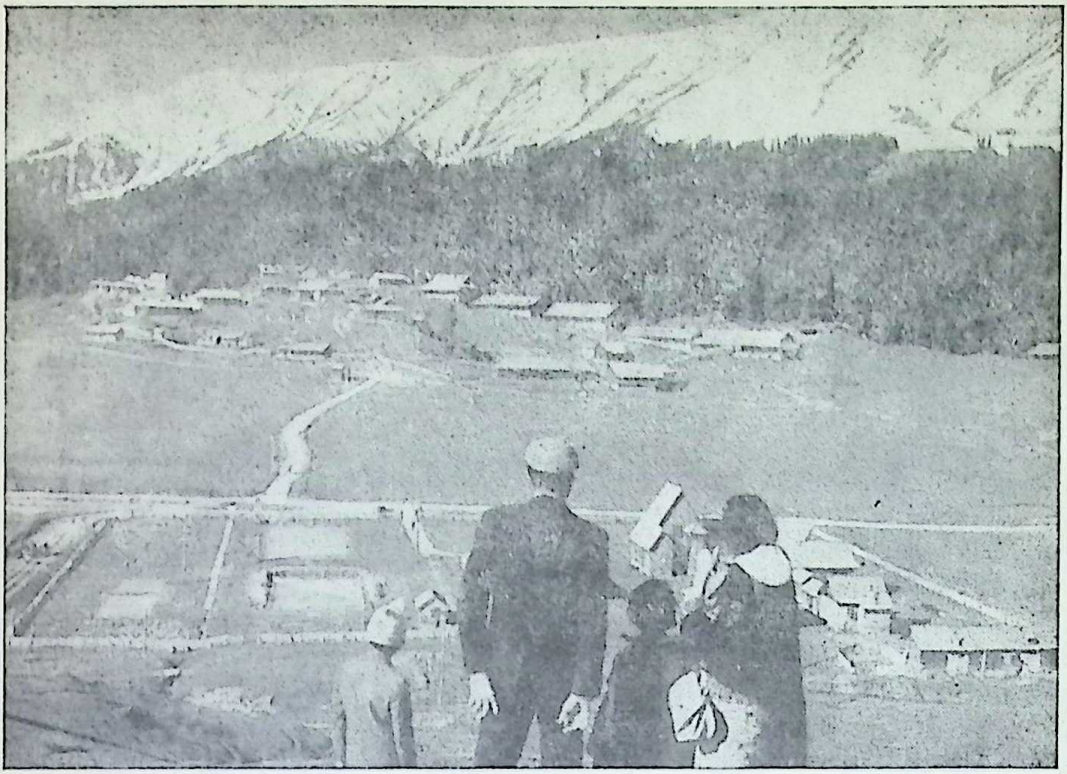
KASHMIR
THE LAND OF CELESTIAL BEAUTY

By Shamsuddin

In the summer holidays, people retreat from the heat of the plains to cool hill stations. Kashmir, besides being cool, is very beautiful. Shamsuddin takes you on a tour of this heavenly place.

THE lovely land of Kashmir is 'a paradise on earth' according to the Persian poet, Firdousi. Eighty miles long and about twenty-five miles wide, Kashmir is separated from the rest of India by the Himalayas. The valley of Kashmir, situated at a height of some 6000 ft. above sea level, is known for its grandeur of natural beauty including rivers, lakes, gardens and other spots of lovely scenery. Indeed it is a tourists' paradise and affords opportunities for a happy holiday unrivalled in Asia and perhaps in the world. It is for this reason that the great immortal poet Kalidas praised the land by saying, "The asylum is more delightful than paradise itself."

There are innumerable beauty spots in Kashmir which fascinate countless visitors and travellers all the year round from all over India



as well as from abroad. Let us start from the capital city of Srinagar. It is spread on both sides of the river Jhelum and connected by nine bridges. Besides the river, the city lies on the edge of the Dal lake, five miles long and two and a half miles wide. It is no wonder then that Srinagar is called the 'Venice of the East'. There are well-equipped modern hotels providing accommodation to the tourists. Besides, the well furnished house-boats prove a great attraction to them.

Five miles away from the city of Srinagar on the Dal lake end, we come across the Moghul gardens of 'Chashme Shahi', 'Nishat' and 'Shalimar'. Against the backdrop of the hills and a fine view of the lake, the gardens really present an exquisite sight. From spring to autumn, they are a feast of colour. The majestic Chinar trees add still greater glory to them and attract picnickers. 'Chashme Shahi', as the very name indicates, is well known for its pure, crystal-clear water. This is surrounded by a garden having many fountains, fed by the main spring. It was built at the instance of Emperor Shah Jahan. Two and a half miles beyond Chashme Shahi, we come across another pleasure garden known as 'Nishat'. It was laid out by Asaf Jah, brother of Nur Jehan. The garden covers a spacious area, 595 yards in length and 369 yards in width. There are beautiful terraces with a

variety of flowers symmetrically arranged in flower beds. Again two miles beyond 'Nishat', we come to another famous garden 'Shalimar'. It was built by Emperor Jehangir for his beloved Nur Jehan. Near Dal Lake there is a remarkable beauty spot which consists of magnificent Chinar trees. It is a delightful camping ground for the visitors.

Having enjoyed the celestial beauty of the gardens, let us move on to have a view of the famous Dal lake. It is the most fascinating beauty spot of Kashmir. The remarkable feature of this lake are the famous floating gardens which have a network of canals. Lotus and lily flowers are found in abundance in this lake. At one corner of the lake, the water is very clear and is ideal for bathing and swimming. After Dal lake, let us go over to another lake known as Wular lake. It is the largest lake in Kashmir. It is jade green in colour and is fed from a sulphur spring on the north west side. Besides these two big lakes, there are a number of other smaller lakes with their own specialities. For example Nagin lake is known for its bathing and boating facilities. Anchar lake is full of duck and snipe in winter. The blue water of Manshal lake looks quiet and serene due to its depth. The Apharwat lake is 4000 feet above Gulmarg. It generally has snow and small icebergs floating on its surface. Kounsernag lake is the largest mountain lake situated at a height of 12000 feet and surrounded by peaks of the Pir Panjal range of mountains.

Besides gardens and lakes, Kashmir has many other places of interest for the tourists. 'Gulmarg' is one of them. It is 28 miles from Srinagar and is 8500 ft. above sea level. As the very name implies, it is 'the meadow of flowers' and is one of the most attractive spots. The climate of this place is always pleasant. Three miles away and over-looking Gulmarg, lies Khilanmarg 'the meadow of goats'. Ningal Nallah, five miles from Gulmarg, is another delightful place for a picnic. All these places afford a pleasent day's outing.

From Gulmarg we come to 'Pahalgam' in the Liddar valley, 60 miles from Srinagar. Situated at a height of 7200 ft., it is famous for its healthy climate. On the way to Pahalgam, we pass through the town of Muttan with the ancient Martland temple in it. Built on an elevated plateau above the valley, the temple displays ancient Kashmiri style art. It is said to have been built by Lalitaditya in the eighth century. Pahalgam is famous for its exquisite scenery and is one of the loveliest spots in the whole of Kashmir. From here people find

Contd. on page 13

Personality is to man what perfume is to a flower—

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BHARAT DARSHAN

TIRUCHENDUR

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

WOULD you like to listen to a miracle that happened to a boy of 10? He is about 60 years old now. The boy was blind and every month he visited this temple with his grandmother. The old lady was desperate about the future of her grandson as she felt she would die soon. She sold her property and started on her last pilgrimage to Tiruchendur with her grandson. "If Subramanya does not help me, we will drown ourselves in the sea," she vowed. As they were nearing 'Ammanpuram', six miles from Tiruchendur, the boy shouted "Grandmother, what is that 'tall-thing' I see?" She was thrilled by the Grace of the Lord in giving vision to her blind grandson, who saw the Gopuram of the sea. Thankfully, they speeded to the temple for darshan.

There is also a legend about the building of this Gopuram. A devotee, Desikamurthiswami was directed by Lord Subramanya to build the Gopuram. Three hundred years ago, the Gopuram was built by the ardent devotee by giving sacred ash as wages to the workers. They were instructed not to open their palms till they reached the Vinayaka temple. At that place, when they opened their palms, to their amazement they found gold equivalent to the day's wages and the amount varied from worker to worker. So they all put their might together and completed the Gopuram in record time, under the inspired guidance of Desikamurthiswami. The Gopuram is decorated with panels depicting important events from the life of a great saint, Manickavasagar.

Kattabomma Nayaka, a heroic chieftain and a patriot, was a great devotee of Subramanya. It is recorded that he would take his lunch only after hearing the relayed message of the ringing of the bell in the temple, at mid-day puja. He had stationed drummers, who relayed the message along the route from Tiruchendur to Panchala Kuruchi, 60 km. away. This great patriot was captured and hanged by the British at the end of the 18th century.

Tiruchendur is one of the six famous shrines dedicated to Subramanya. His worship is very popular in the South. There are a number of smaller temples also, most of them on hillocks. In Tamil, he is known as 'Muruga', "the beautiful one". In the north, Subramanya is known as 'Kartikeya', one who was taken care of by Kartika nymphs.

Concluded

ADI SANKARA

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Chitra Rao

The title of Acharya was conferred on Sankara when he was only twelve years old. Chitra Rao introduces you to this brilliant saint.

ADI Sankara's birthday falls on the first of May this year. One thousand and two hundred years ago, a couple called Sivaguru and Aryamba did penance at Vadakkunnatha temple at Trichur asking Lord Shiva for a son. Lord Shiva was pleased with their penance and appeared to them in a dream asking them if they wanted a brilliant son with a short life or an ordinary son with a long life. The couple opted for the brilliant son. So the Lord blessed them saying that he himself would take birth as their son.

Sankara was born in Kalady. It is very difficult to fix his exact date of birth. Some say that he was born in 788 A. D. and died in 820 A. D., while others claim that he was born in the first century B C.

When Sankara was four years old, his father died. He had his Upanayana (thread ceremony) in his fifth year. Sankara was then sent to a learned Brahmin to study the Vedas. He was very intelligent and soon learnt all that was taught to him. Every Brahmachari has to beg for alms (bhiksha) and live on it. One day as he was going around for bhiksha, he came to the house of a very poor Brahmin who himself lived on the charity of others. When Sankara reached his house, only his wife was there. The only thing she could find in the house was an amalaka (goose-berry) which she gave him. Sankara at once realised the goodness of the lady and he prayed to Goddess Mahalaxmi, who in answer to his prayers showered gold amalakas on the Brahmin's house.

At the age of eight, Sankara completed his education and returned home. By now his mother had become old and found it very difficult to walk to the river Purna for her bath. So Sankara prayed to the Lord to make the river flow by his house, so that his mother did not have to go far away for her bath. The very next morning, the river Purna was flowing beside his house.

Sankara had already decided to become a Sanyasi, but his mother

There is no enemy like anger—

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refused to give him permission. She wanted him to get married and have a family.

One day Sankara was bathing in the river, when a crocodile caught hold of his leg. He cried out for help and his mother came running on hearing his shouts. But as she was on the river bank, there was nothing she could do. Sankara cried out "Oh! mother I am going into the jaws of death, at least now grant me the permission to become a Sanyasi." Aryamba agreed immediately and Sankara chanted Sannyasthoham (I have renounced) thrice. The crocodile instantly let him go.

Aryamba was very happy to see her son safe and asked him to come home but he refused and decided to start his wanderings. However she took a promise from him that he would come home at the time of her death and perform her funeral rites. Just before he left his village, he dreamt of Lord Achyuta (Lord Vishnu) who asked him to go to Sri Govindapada Acharya at Omkarnath.

He reached his guru Sri Govindapada after walking for two months on end. Sri Govindapada was in deep meditation in a cave. Sankara entered the cave and started singing a hymn in praise of his guru. When he opened his eyes, he saw Sankara at his feet and accepted him as his shishya (disciple).

Once during the rainy reason, the river Narmada was flooded and the water rose and came right upto the entrance of the cave. The guru was deep in meditation and the disciples were too scared to wake him up. Sankara placed his Kamandalu (water container) at the entrance of the cave, saying that it would absorb all the flood waters. As soon as the water reached the Kamandalu, it started going back and soon the river was on its normal course.

After Sankara had learnt all that his guru could teach him, he was instructed to go to Kasi. Before he left, his Guru died and the disciples immersed the body in the river. In Kasi, he lived near the Visvanath temple at Manikarnika ghat.

He spent most of his time meditating and teaching the Vedantic texts. Sankara propounded the doctrine that Brahman, the ultimate All, is the only Reality. Soon the pundits conferred the title Acharya on Sankara who became Sankaracharya when he was just twelve years old. (To be continued)

A gentleman is a man who can disagree without being disagreeable —

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QUIZ CORNER

By Jal Engineer

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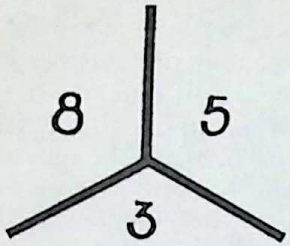

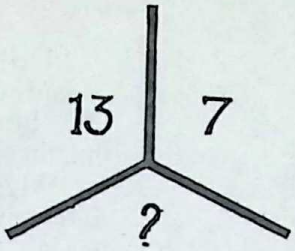

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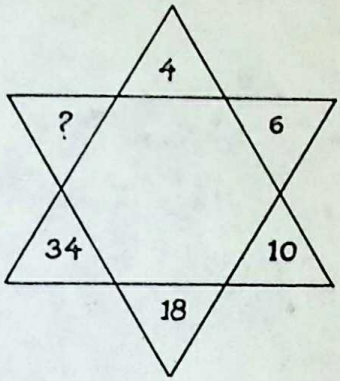

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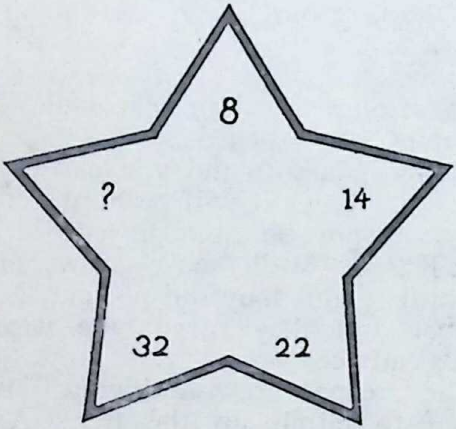

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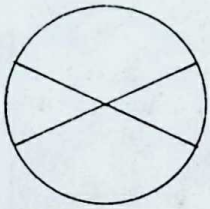

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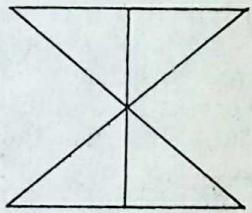

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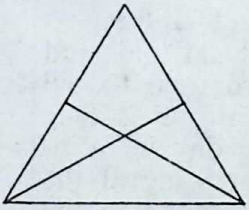

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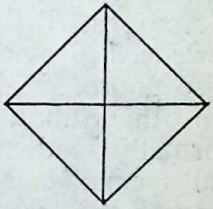

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Beliefs cannot survive if one has no chance to fight for them–
With Prem and Om — Chinmaya Family, Kuwait.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE?

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

By Rajat Batra

ONCE upon a time, in a big forest, stood a huge tree. This tree was deep in the forest and was very tall. It's leafy branches spread out. It was the home of wild geese. They had chosen it as a home because no outsider or enemy could see them. No one could ever climb the tree to set a trap, so they felt safe.

Amongst the young and inexperienced geese lived an old and wise goose. This bird used to tell the others about the mistakes they normally made. One day he noticed a small creeper growing at the foot of the tree. He spoke to the other birds about it.

"Do you see that creeper?" asked the goose. "You must destroy it", he said. "It is so small. What harm can it do?" asked the geese.

"My friends", replied the wise old bird, "that little creeper will soon grow. It will climb up on our tree, and then it will become thick and strong."

"What difference does it make?" asked the geese. "What harm can a creeper do to us?"

"Don't you see? Someone could climb up the creeper to the tree. It would be an invitation to any hunter. He could kill us all", replied the wise old bird. "Well, there is no hurry," said the lazy birds. "It is so small that it would be a pity to destroy it now."

"You ought to destroy it while it is young," he advised.

"Now it is soft and you can cut it easily. Later it will be hard and you will not be able to cut it." "We'll see. We'll see", answered the birds. But they did not cut the creeper and they forgot the wise bird's advice.

The creeper grew and grew. It began to climb up the tree. As

Pure conscience is the voice of God —

Vijay Corporation

2nd Floor, Ideal Industrial Estate, Tulsipipe Road,
Lower Parel, Bombay - 400 013.

time passed, it grew stronger and stronger. At last, it was as strong as a thick rope.

One morning, when the flock of wild geese went in search of food, a hunter came to their tree.

He said to himself, "So this is where the wild geese live. When they come home I shall catch them in my net."

The hunter climbed up the tree with the help of the creeper. He reached the top and spread his net there. He climbed down and went away.

In the evening, the geese returned home. They did not notice the hunter's net. As they flew into their nest they found that they were caught in the net. They struggled with all their might but could not escape.

"Help! Help!" cried the geese. "We are caught in a hunter's net. Oh, what shall we do?"

"Don't make such a fuss now," said the wise old bird. "Long ago I told you to cut the creeper, but you did not. Now see what has happened. Tomorrow morning, the hunter will come back. He will climp up the tree by the creeper and kill us all."

"We were foolish," wept the birds. "We are sorry we did not listen to you. Please pardon us. Tell us what to do now to save our lives." "Then listen carefully," replied the wise old bird. "I shall tell you what to do." He then related his plan.

In the morning, the hunter went to the tree. He climbed up by the creeper. He looked at the geese in the net. All of them looked dead. He took the birds out of the net one by one and threw them down. The birds waited for the last one to reach the ground. Then all of a sudden, they came to life. They rose up and flew away.

Contd. from page 7

their way to Sonasar, Sheshnag, the Amarnath cave etc.

After this, we come to 'Sonamarg' which means 'meadow of gold'. It is situated in Sindh valley and is linked with Srinagar by a 52 mile-motor road. It is 8750 feet above sea level. 'Sonamarg' is a spacious meadow and provides excellent camping ground for the tourists. We then come to 'Yusmarg' – a small meadow set in the heart of the mountains at a distance of twenty nine miles from Srinagar. A rest house is provided here and people often come to this place for picnics.

The people of Kashmir are simple and peaceful by nature and extremely hospitable to visitors. They have a deep sense of aesthetic beauty which finds expression in their works of art. Kashmiris are fine craftsmen and their woodwork, embroidery, silver-ware and shawls are known the world over. The climate is extremely pleasant and invigorating.

In brief, Kashmir is really a paradise on earth. It caters to all tastes. The poet and the painter, the botanist and the archaeologist, the workman and the traveller all find food for thought. Everyone here takes his fill out of Nature's bounty.

ONCE there lived in the woods, a flock of rabbits. They were a large family of grandparents, uncles, aunts, parents, cousins and grandchildren. The bigger rabbits always looked after their little ones. They spared no efforts to please the young ones, getting them sweet berries, tasty nuts, and lush greens. They taught them to hop, skip and jump, to run past a hunter, to hide quietly on the brown earth. The juniors folded their ears back so that even a sharp eye did not locate them. They learned to gnaw at the soft roots and to play hide and seek when the mid-day sun made shadows on the forest floor.

count on your gains too. You have your brains and you will have to use them." And then he told them what they could do. They then slept peacefully.

Soon the rains were over. The forest around became a lush green carpet. New buds smiled on the vines and creepers. Little birds came out on bright mornings and held music sessions. Babblers used the afternoon for their incessant gossip. Hunters also began trickling in. One full-moon night, our rabbit clan wanted to have a picnic. They went to an open meadow, quite close to a lake. The uncles and aunts were busy preparing the dinner.

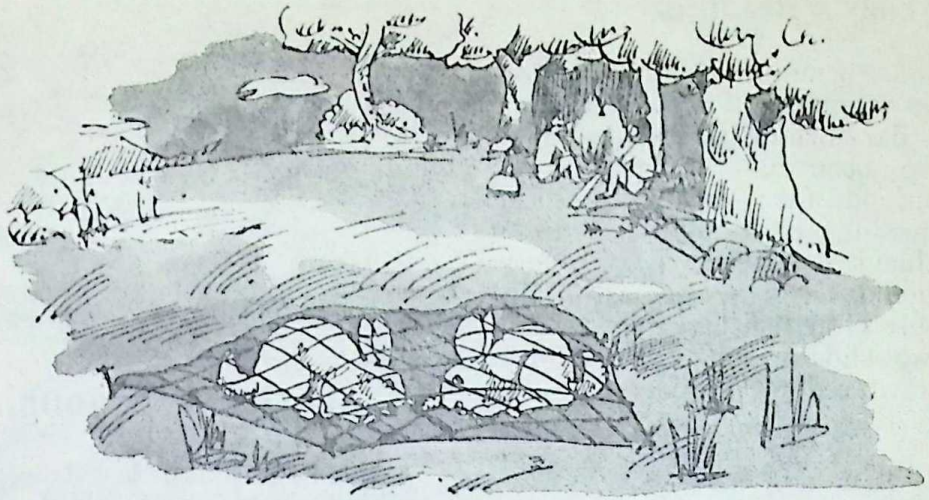
THE NARROW ESCAPE

By Rohini Iyer

On rainy nights, they huddled together in their burrow and listened to their grandfather's stories while their grandmother passed around shelled peas and groundnuts. Grandpa told them fairy tales, stories of kings and queens and of wicked demons and cunning foxes. He taught them many wise sayings. He used to tell them, "You are tiny, soft and loveable angels, precious to us. You are growing big and should learn to take care of yourselves." Little Brownie, the youngest of them asked, "Grandpa, I am afraid of the fox. If he comes and smells me, how will I escape? I am so tiny that with one single blow from him, I'll die. How can I ever save myself?" "But you can

Grandpa and Grandma took Brownie and party for a walk. Soon Granny stopped. Her ears perked up. She sniffed. "I smell Uncle Fox," she said. "There, there, we shall decoy him. Run away, you little ones. There may be the poacher's nets too. Take care, look after yourselves."

Soon, the ruby-eyed brown fox glided in. Granny jumped in front of him. He made a jump at her, but fell a little short. Grandpa jumped to the left of them. The fox turned around and made for Grandpa. Granny appeared to limp just when he almost reached Grandpa. Distracted, he thought of chasing the lame rabbit. She sprang up and landed behind a tree in the shadows.



The fox chased her. Granny kicked an anthill and hid behind it. The fox scented the rabbit and poked his nose almost into the anthill. The disturbed ants attacked him on his nose and eyes. He struggled a lot to shake them loose. Ah! They had bitten him on his eye-lids too. He had a swollen eye and a burning nose.

Grandpa and Grandma soon found their way back to the picnic spot. Two of the little ones were still missing. The others had already reached. Brownie and Grey were not to be found. The aunts and uncles were becoming panicky. "That kid is timid", said Brownie's mother. Her father and uncles decided to go out searching for the missing ones. Grey had lost her parents when they fell ill during the winter.

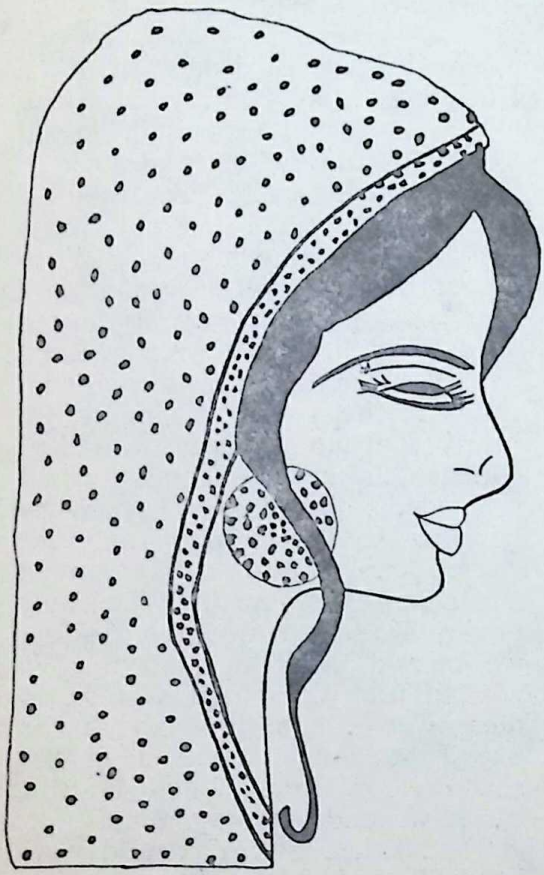
"Wait", said Grandpa. "They have their brains, and know how to use them. They will be back soon." They waited for some more time. Slowly, two little figures emerged from the distant shadows. Everybody was talking and asking at the same time. Grandpa rose and cleared his throat. "There, there. Stop this. Let us hear from them." There was sudden silence. Everybody was listening intently. "When we ran away, we fell into a net in a ditch. At first we were frightened to death. Slowly, we remembered what you had said. We started gnawing at the ropes. Suddenly, we heard footsteps. Those men had come to check. We kept quiet and pretended to be dead. They saw us lying still and went their way. We started again. They soon returned and again we stopped. When they made a fire and sat around it, talking, we started working again. We worked pretty fast and as soon as there was a hole big enough for one, I got out. I waited in the shadows for Grey. When she also came, we made our way home."

"Thank heavens! You used your heads!" said her mother sighing with relief.

Everybody's Beautiful

We all are beautiful in our own way. It doesn't matter if we are big or small, dark or fair because we might not be beautiful in being good looking but then we are beautiful in something else. God has made us and he knows what type of beauty we should have. The most beautiful gift God has given us is love and we should share this with others who don't get it.

By Mitali Sethi (11 *years*)



By Anil Shivdasani (13 years)

Thrice is enough!

Shobha Muluth has bagged this rolling shield for the third and last time. The Indian Institute of Mental Health and Human Relations awarded it to her for the best individual item. A third standard student, Shobha also attends the Uttam Bala Vihar class, Chembur. According to the rules, she is not allowed to take part in the competition next year. This is because she has won the shield for three years in a row-1976, 1977 and 1978. Thrice is enough !

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

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Editor
Bal Vihar

27-3

RAMAYANA

INTRODUCTION

VERY many later poets, scholars, painters, sculptors, story tellers, dancers, and dramatists have drawn inspiration from this great and fascinating Epic.

Although most of us may know the story since childhood through our grandmothers, it is ever—fresh every time we hear and read it. Just as we are never tired of looking into the mirror because of our love for our body, so too, Srimad Ramayana is the mirror to our inner life and hence we enjoy hearing it again and again! Before we start the story, we shall try to understand more about the great author of this Epic and the birth of Ramayana through him.

MEET VALMIKI

THE Ramayana is an अनुग्रहग्रन्थ —Book of Divine origin which flowed out of sage Valmiki due to the Lord's grace and blessings. The total change in the personality of the author, who was a hunter and dacoit before, led to the creation of the Epic. This is a standing example of the power and effect of श्रीनामनाम (chanting Sri Rama's name).

This is again a striking illustration of the para :

मूकं करोति वाचालं पङ्गुं लङ्घयते गिरिम् ।
यत् कृपा तमहं वन्दे परमानन्द माधवम् ॥

which means:

"I bow to that Lord Madhava, through whose grace the dumb become eloquent and the lame are able to cross over mountains". However dumb or weak a person may be, with the Grace of the Lord, which is acquired by devotion, he is blessed with knowledge and is able to get over mountainous difficulties in life! The life of Dhruva and Prahlada are examples of this grace obtained through deep devotion! Sage Valmiki, the Adi Kavi—the first poet—is another example!

Sage Valmiki, earlier known as Ratnakar, belonged to a fierce hunter tribe. He lived in the forest and maintained himself and his family for years by hunting animals and plundering, people who passed by. Thus, he was all along living the life of an animal by mere instincts.

One day, the Seven Great Rishis happened to pass through the forest when Ratnakar challenged them, as usual. But to his utter surprise, they were not afraid of

Obstacles come to pass away–
Shri Govindabhai K. Raja
68/F Napean Sea Road, Suvas Apartments, 4th Floor, Bombay - 400 006.

him and did not try to run. Instead, they calmly enquired who he was and what he wanted. By the very sight (Darshan) of the Holy Rishis, for the first time in his life, the human in him was rising above his animal instincts. He, therefore, felt like listening and honestly replied that he was a hunter who lived by dacoity and asked for their belongings. The Rishis told him that his activities were sinful (Adharmic) as he made innocent people suffer, for no fault of theirs. Further, he could not escape the resulting reaction of sorrow and suffering that would follow him in life for such actions done in the past.

When Ratnakar said that he was not doing such actions for himself but for his family, the Rishis enquired whether his family members would share the burden of his sins. He had not thought of this so far but he was sure that his family would support him. To make sure, he rushed to his house and explained all that happened on that fateful day. To his shock, his family members flatly refused to share his burden of sins as it was his duty to feed and maintain them! This unexpected reaction further unfolded the human in Ratnakar and feelings of guilt, regret and sorrow over his past evil deeds flooded his mind.

When he found that even his near and dear ones had let him down, he ran back in anguish and fell at the feet of the Holy Rishis and sought relief for his mental sufferings. Out of pity, the sages consoled him and while assuring that every sinner has a future, prescribed a remedy! After his bath, he was made to sit under a tree and the Rishis advised him to chant Rama - Rama (राम–राम) continuously. He did it with determination and devotion like an ailing man would take the doctor's medicine for relief.

A miracle was taking place! After a long period, when the Rishis passed by that place, they heard the word Rama emerging constantly from an anthill under a tree. They remembered the earlier incident and when they broke the anthill they saw within a radiant person in deep meditation whose every cell was vibrating with रामनाम (the name of Rama)! They discovered that he was none other than the hunter-dacoit Ratnakar, whom they had initiated earlier. He opened his eyes and bowed to the Rishis in tearful gratitude. Since he had a new birth from the anthill (वालमीक), he was named Valmiki. This is the great sage who was not only cleansed of his sins by the magic name of राम (Rama) but also the one who beca-

Every temptation is a test of your strength—
Jolly & Maker
Maker Bhavan No. 2., New Marine Lines, Bombay - 400 020.

came the first poet (Adi Kavi), and the author of the great Epic 'Ramayana'.

The Dhyana Sloka of Srimad Ramayana praises him thus :

कूजन्तं रामरामेति मधुरं मधुराक्षरम ।
आरुह्य कविता शखां वन्दे वालमीकि कोकिलम् ।।

(We bow to the Valmiki cuckoo (Koel) who, having climbed the topmost branch of the tree of poetry, sings constantly the sweet and sweet-lettered Rama-Rama.)

IN VAIN

What is Life?
Just a trifle —
We know not what
Or when will be.

You may strive and plan
For all you want – in vain
If the Lord has so ordained.

For all you plan
May be in vain
If the Lord has so ordained.

By Vinita.

AROUND BOMBAY

By Aunty Lal

Aunty Lal takes you on a tour of this busy city, telling you little known facts about it.

TAKE a bus ride in the city of Bombay. No matter where the bus goes you'll find that the sea is not far away. That's not surprising. After all, originally, Bombay was a cluster of seven islands Colaba, Fort, Byculla, Parel, Worli, Matunga and Mahim joined to each other.

Over the years, by reclaiming land from the sea and closing the gaps, Bombay was extended up to Mulund and Dahisar. The island has now taken the shape of a peninsula.

Once upon a time, these marshy islands were inhabited only by the Koli fisherfolk. They called these islands "Mumbai" probably after the Mother Goddess Mumbadevi.

Ages passed. Then in 1534 the islands were ceded to the King of Portugal by Sultan Bahadurshah. "Mumbai" became "Bom Bahia"— Portugese for "The Beautiful Bay." When in 1661, Portugal's Princess Catherine of Braganza married King Charles II of England, the islands formed part of her dowry.

With the development of the port of Bombay and the rapid growth of various industries in the area, Bombay has become one of the premier cities of the world.

There are many parks and gardens in the city. Jijamata Bhosale Udyan (formerly Victoria Garden) is a well known botanical garden. Situated in Byculla, the garden has

a museum at its entrance and a zoo in its midst.

When you visit the zoo you'll see lions and tigers in their cages; monkeys playing pranks in their enclosures; a huge hippopotamus lolling in the shallow water of his well. There are many other animals and birds as well.

Another interesting place for you is the Kamala Nehru Park in Malabar Hill. Here, there is a gigantic Old Woman's Shoe. You can climb in and out of it. Across the road are the famous Hanging Gardens. They do not hang in the air. It is simply a garden built on top of the water reservoirs.

The waves of the Arabian sea lashing the shores of Chowpatty sands, at one end of Marine Drive, welcome many a visitor. Every evening the beach is crowded with the old and the young and wears a festive look. You can build a sand castle or eat bhel-puri, a snack of savouries and chutney.

The Juhu Beach in North Bombay is another fine seashore. Graceful palms sway in the surrounding areas. You can trot on a pony or swing on the camel's back along the shoreline.

There are various landmarks in the city, some of which mark historical events in its growth. The Gateway of India was built to commemorate the visit of King George V of England in 1911. A tall statue of Shivaji on horseback faces the Gateway of India. It almost seems to say, "I shall protect India if any enemy dares to enter through this gate." The 260 ft. high Rajabai Tower is named after the mother of Premchand Raichand, an industrialist. His large donation helped in building a University Library and the clock tower.

At the Nehru planetarium, Worli, you can gaze at the milky way (stars). At the Aarey Milk Colony you can see how the milk is processed and bottled. The city has many interesting places, splendid gardens, beautiful temples and churches. And it is full of people.

People come from all parts of India. They work in various industries, in port, educational institutions, social welfare institutions etc. This ever expanding capital of Maharashtra shelters nearly seven million people. Some of them live in skyscrapers, others in huts, still others on footpaths.

When you next take a bus ride look out for some of the places mentioned above. Perhaps, you might even buy a book to know more about this metropolis—Bombay.

A clean conscience is like a soft pillow. He who has this pillow, sleeps soundly –

M/s. Balco

Unit No. 107, 1st Floor, A-Z Industrial Estate, Fergusson Road,
Bombay - 400 013.

HANUMAN ANNOYS RAMA

By Lata Venkatachalam

MADHAV was a Gandharva (an angel living in the Heavens). He was a great devotee of Lord Rama.

Once Madhav and his wife were returning to the heavens after a holy dip. Sage Narada and Vishwamitra were sitting on earth talking about the holy scriptures. Sage Narada noticed the Gandharva and his wife flying in the air.

Sage Narada is used to creating disputes. As usual he complained to Vishwamitra that the Gandharva was so proud that he did not even pay his respects to him. Vishwamitra, convinced by Narada that Madhav had tried to insult him, was furious. He vowed to have the Gandharva's head at his feet within a fortnight's time with Lord Rama's help. Both departed in opposite directions—Vishwamitra going to Lord Rama and Narada going to Madhav.

Madhav had not been conscious of sage Narada and Vishwamitra sitting below him or he would have paid his respects to them. The Gandharva was as usual absorbed in singing the glories of Lord Rama, when Sage Narada entered. Madhav was pleased to see Narada and paid his respects to him. Narada conveyed the news of Vishwamitra's vow. Madhav was terrified and did not know what to do.

Meanwhile, Vishwamitra had gone to Rama and asked him to make a promise. Rama, glad to be of help, eagerly promised. Only then did Vishwamitra tell Rama of his vow and that Rama was to fulfil that vow. Rama tried to dissuade his Guru from keeping his vow. But the Guru would not agree.

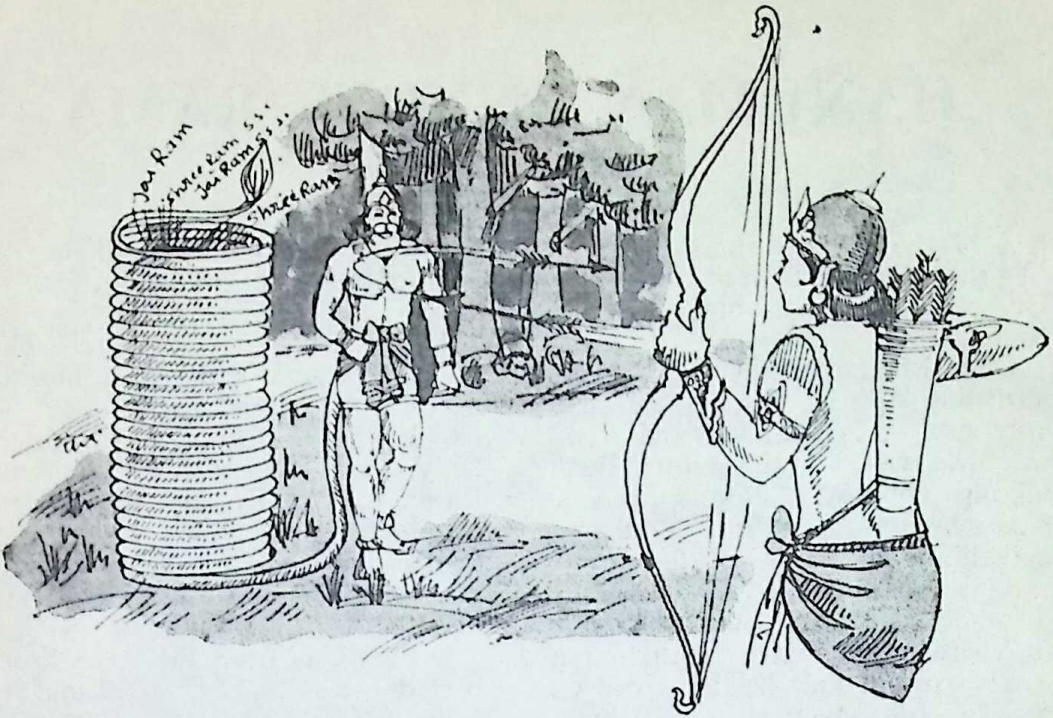
Madhav, hearing the news from Narada, had rushed to Rama to seek his help. Hearing this, Madhav was all the more worried. At this stage, Narada advised him to go and seek Hanuman's mother's aid. He said, "Hanuman's mother does Surya Pooja everyday. As soon as she finishes it, fall at her feet and extract a promise from her that she will save you." So the next day, Madhav did accordingly. She said she would request Hanuman to do so.

When Hanuman heard of his mother's promise to Madhav, at first he was not willing to obey his mother. But Narada convinced him. He told Hanuman to lengthen his tail. Madhav would sit in the middle. Hanuman would encircle

Man considers the actions; God weighs the intentions–

International Chemicals

Dadabhai Phalkey Road, Dadar, Bombay– 400 014.



him with his tail and then he would concentrate on Lord Rama and recite his name.

Hanuman did as advised and recited "Shree Rama Jaya Rama Jaya Jaya Rama." He recited it for 15 days. As time was approaching, Rama ordered Hanuman to bring Madhav. But Hanuman was concentrating on Rama. Though they looked for Madhav, he could not be found. Rama then went with Vishwamitra and Lakshmana to Hanuman. Narada joined them. He told them of Madhav's hiding place.

Rama was filled with anger. How could his dearest devotee disobey him? He called Hanuman. But Hanuman was concentrating on Rama. Rama's lips quivered. His eyes were filled with anger and he was shaking with rage. He thought of killing Hanuman. Arrows were shot one after another towards Hanuman. But since he was concentrating on the Lord, the arrows came back to Rama. Rama did not know what to do. He thought of putting an end to his life as he could not fulfil Vishwamitra's promise. At this stage, Narada called out to Hanuman and ordered him to bring Madhav from his hiding place. Hanuman did as he was told and when Madhav was brought, Narada asked him to fall at Vishwamitra's feet. Since Vishwamitra wanted Madhav's head to fall at his feet, Madhav did so without losing his life. And so, all were pleased with Narada's judgement.

Worry is the interest paid on trouble before it is due —

Jafkay Engineering Corporation

A-21, Marol, MIDC Industrial Estate, Bombay - 400 059.

Let us go into the temple and offer worship. We go to the 'Sanctum sanctorum'. There Lord Subramanya is ready to offer worship. See the rosary in his left hand and the flowers in the right hand. He holds his weapon in the upper right hand and the lower right hand is placed on the thigh. When Subramanya camped here, he wanted to worship his father. Mayan, the divine architect built this temple on the sand-stone reef. There is a small corridor behind Subramanya's idol and there are Siva Lingas, to whom Subramanya offered worship.

Here is Lord Shanmugha, the "six-faced one". He is the "Utsava Murti", the Lord who comes out on special festival days and gives darshan to the devotees. Notice his wives, Valli Devi on his right, and Deivayana on the left.

A very interesting episode has been recorded about this Shanmugha 'murti'. A group of Dutch traders who landed at Tiruchendur in 1648, saw this image. Thinking that it was of solid gold, one night they carried it to their ship and sailed away. Soon there was a storm and they feared that the disaster was due to the presence of the idol. They threw it into the sea. The next morning, the devotees learnt of the theft of Lord Shanmugha and they were grief stricken. The representative of the Nayak ruler at Tirunelveli, a great devotee, came forward to make a new image of Lord Shanmugha. The installation day was fixed. He had a dream directing him to go out into the sea in a particular direction and look out for a floating lemon and Garuda (Vahana of Vishnu) hovering above the sea. The spot was located and Lord Shanmugha was recovered. The re-installation of the Lord was performed with great joy.

There are three 'prakaras' (corridors) around the sanctum sanctorum. There are separate shrines for Valli and Deivayana. In the outermost prakara, there is a temple for Vishnu. Lord Venkateswara, Lord Ranganatha with Lakshmi and other Goddesses and Vaishnava saints are installed here. In this temple, we can see the evidence of the sand-stone reef on the wall. There is a small cave temple in the north and this is also carved out of the sand rock. There is an image of Valli, one of the wives of Subramanya.

Before we leave the temple, we must visit the spot of a rare natural phenomenon. On the southern side of the temple, there is a big well and inside this is a small well which is about one square foot and seven feet deep. The water in this small well is sweet, while the water of the big well is saltish. We are told that Subramanya plunged in his 'Vel' (mace) at this spot and fresh water gushed out for the benefit of his thirsty warriors. You can also taste the sweet water.

Look at the gigantic and beautiful Gopuram (entrance tower) on the west. It is 137 ft. high and has nine storeys. It can be seen from about 10 km. away both on land and sea.

To be continued

Think !

Enthusiasm is the very fuel in all great men.

Just as a car cannot move forward without fuel (petrol), a man cannot achieve anything worthwhile without enthusiasm (active interest). This is what makes him great.

This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Bal Vihar. The last date for sending in entries is July 15th, so send in your entry soon.

THE GREEDY JACKAL

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

By Lalogue Postvala

IN a certain forest there lived a jackal, Lobhi. He was sly and selfish. All the other animals in the forest disliked him.

One day he was prowling about unhappily because he had not found anything to eat for many days. At that time he saw a hunter ready to kill any animal which would come his way. The cunning Lobhi hid among the bushes close by.

Soon a big boar appeared. The hunter drew the string of his bow and sent the arrow flying. The arrow pierced the boar's neck. Grunting with rage and pain, the wounded boar attacked the hunter and gored him to death with his sharp tusks. Then he too fell dead.

Watching all this from behind the bushes Lobhi was very happy. "What luck," he thought. "This boar's meat will provide me food for many a day."

Since his hunger pangs were increasing, he quickly fell on the boar's flesh. He ate and he ate until he could eat no more.

The other animals passing by begged him to let them have a bite. They too were starving as food was scarce that year in the forest.

The mean jackal refused to share the meat with others. He snarled at them, "Go away you beggars. Find your own food." Having

eaten his fill he lay down near the kill.

It was already getting dark. Night was approaching. Lobhi could hear other animals moving close by. Fearing that if they all came together, they could easily drive him away, Lobhi decided to eat all that was left of the dead boar. Though he was not hungry he started eating again. He did not even leave the neck portion where the arrow had pierced the flesh. Greedy Lobhi kept on eating until he began to have a strange feeling in his stomach. The feeling grew into an acute pain.

"Aoo, Aoo, Oowl," he cried and began rolling on the ground in pain. He rolled and he howled, and he rolled and he howled, until he died.

Can you guess why Lobhi died? The tip of the hunter's arrow was dipped in poison.

Attention Artists !

Those of you who wish to send drawings for artist's corner, are most welcome to do so. But please see that you use black ink for drawing.

Raindrops

By Monika Lalwani (9 years)

I hear leaves drinking rain
I hear rich leaves on top
giving the poor beneath
drop after drop;
'Tis a sweet noise to hear—
These green leaves drinking near.

And when the sun comes out,
after this rain stops,
A wondrous light will fill
each dark, round drop.
With the sun shining bright,
'Twill be a lovely sight.

Crying for the Moon

Rama, son of King Dasaratha, was a child. On a moonlit night he put out his hand to catch the moon. But how could he get the moon?

Rama's mother, Queen Kaushalya, tried hard to please Rama but it could not be done. Kaushalya placed a shining plate of diamonds in front of Rama. But Rama knocked them all down with his little fists. His mother tried to give him milk and to sing him to sleep. But Rama could not be consoled. He kept on weeping.

At last a wise man placed a mirror before him and said, "Look, here is the moon." Looking into it, Rama was pleased.

By Bishan Swaroop Aggarwal

BHARAT DARSHAN
KRISHNAPURAM SCULPTURES

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

TODAY we are going to Krishnapuram, which is about 45 km. west of Tiruchendur. There is a small Vishnu shrine here. But the fame of Krishnapuram rests on the exquisite beauty of the scupltures. There is a mandapam (hall) in front of the sanctum sanctorum and in this mandapam, there are six pillars with lovely sculptures. The sculptors were master-craftsmen who had the imagination to present dramatic events in a life-like manner. These were carved under the patronage of Krishnappa Naik at the end of the sixteenth century.

The sculptor who was fascinated by a popular folk story wanted to make it ever-lasting. Here is the story that he has immortalised. A princess of the Chola kingdom was in love with a chieftain of the Pandyan kingdom. Both these kingdoms were at war with each other. On an appointed day, the princess went away with her lover. Learning of this plot, the Chola warriors chased them. Finding that the princess was not able to keep pace with him, the chieftain carried her on his shoulders and ran fast, so that he could step into the Pandyan frontier. A Chola warrior on horseback was desperate to rescue the princess. He pierced the left side of the chieftain with his lance.

The Chola Warrior

Photo : Mr. Chockalingam

Inspite of the bleeding wound, the chieftain sucessfully stepped into native soil with his treasure.

The sculpture is beautiful. The princess is poised comfortably on the shoulders of her lover. She is delighted with the victory of her Lord. Her face is enchanting. She has used the end of her saree (pallav) like an umbrella to ward off the

sun. The hair-style, jewels, and clothes of the princess and the chieftain are carved with great skill. The horse, seen on the side of the pillar, looks like it would leap into life any moment under the whip of the rider. The lance has pierced the left side of the chieftain and the blood flowing from the wound is seen. The sculptor has planned the entire piece so skilfully that the red shade of the stone is the spot of the wound. Hence the stone gets life in the hands of this artist, whose name we do not know. In India the great sculptors and artists did not reveal their names because they offered their talents to God.

There is another marvellous sculpture. It is an adventure from Mahabharata. The sculptor has shown the strong and powerful Pandava, Bhima held in the grip of the fierce Purushamriga. Nearby stands the eldest of the Pandavas, Dharmaputra.

Purushamriga was half-human and half-beast and lived in a deep jungle. For the completion of a Yoga, the milk of Purushamriga was needed. Knowing that it was a devotee of Lord Shiva, Bhima got the milk when it was in deep penance. Suddenly it realised what had happened and chased Bhima. To help Bhima, Sri Krishna gave him three stones to be thrown behind, one by one. Each stone became a Shiva temple and the Purushamriga prayed at each of them. This helped Bhima to gain time to cross the jungle frontier. But even then he was caught with one foot in the jungle.

In the heated dispute between Bhima and Purushamriga, Dharmaputra was requested to be the mediator. He offered to the Purushamriga half of his body on behalf of his guilty brother, Bhima. Touched by his devotion to Dharma and affection for his brother, the Purushamriga freed Bhima. He also turned over a new leaf and gave up his cannibal ways. The three figures are portrayed in a vivid and picturesque manner, bringing the story to life. It is a gem of a sculpture.

There is a pillar with Arjuna doing penance for getting a Pasupata Astra (the special weapon of Lord Shiva). The peace, patience and determination of the great warrior is revealed in his face. His flowing beard shows the long and severe nature of the penance undertaken. But through the bow and arrow in his hand, the sculptor indicates that the penance itself was for a greater mastery over Astras. When we visit Mahabalipuram, we will see there the details of 'Arjuna's penance' depicted on a large scale.

Next to Arjuna stands Karna, with Nagapasa (a serpent — like weapon) in his hand. That reminds

Contd. on page No. 21

The path of duty is the way to glory —
Polyplastics Corporation
105-106, A-Z Industrial Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg
Lower Parel, Bombay - 400 013.

THE WHITE FIGURE

By M. P. Sugunan

VINOD was returning home after seeing a drama held at his school. As it had already become quite dark, Vinod decided to return home by the Bahadurgunj road, which led through a grave-yard. This would be easier for him than walking the long way through the city.

But he had not reckoned with the loneliness of the Bahadurgunj road. Not a soul could be seen for miles. Vinod started feeling scared as he thought of passing by the grave-yard, which was supposed to be haunted. "There are no ghosts. I don't believe in them," said Vinod to himself to shake off his fear.

Suddenly an owl hooted nearby, and Vinod almost fainted with fright. The darkness became more and more frightening. Owls and night birds screeched away at regular intervals. Vinod heard a strange sound which froze him with fear, but it was only a frog croaking.

Now, he was nearing the grave-yard. He became tense. "All the stories I have heard about this place couldn't be wrong." he thought. So he quickened his steps. Suddenly, his eyes alighted on a figure on the roadside. It was a white form with arms outstretched. Vinod started shivering with fear. "It's a ghost" he thought, and started running, but hardly had he run for a yard, when he felt as if he couldn't move. He opened his mouth to scream, but no sound came out of his throat. Just then all the surroundings started rotating before Vinod's eyes, and he felt as if he was falling into a deep black pit. He lay unconscious on the road.

When the sun rose over the grave-yard the next morning, two travellers passing by, found a 14 year-old boy lying on the roadside. When they shook him, Vinod awoke startled. "Help, ghosts!" he shouted. But when he opened his eyes and saw the two men, he found that it was morning, and that the men before him were only two travellers.

"Why were you shouting?" asked one of them. Vinod pointed to his right and said "That ghost there. Save me from it!" The man looked towards where he was pointing, and started laughing. Puzzled, Vinod also turned around. He was surprised when he found the ghost to be just an ordinary mile-post, with two wooden arms outstretched.

By now the two men had understood everything. "It is strange that an educated boy like you should believe in ghosts," they told Vinod, and went their way. Ashamed, Vinod also stood up and set off towards home.

ADI SANKARA

THE STORY OF HIS LIFE

By Chitra Rao

Among his disciples was a Brahmin called Sanandana. He was very attached to Sankaracharya. Sanandana was engaged in some work on the other bank of the river Alakananda. The Acharya, who was accompanied by other disciples called out to him to come him immediately. The usual path to the other bank was a long route and would take time. Sanandana, startled by the sudden call of his master, started crossing the turbulent river straight across to reach him in the least possible time. As soon as he stepped on the water, a full-blown lotus sprang up to support him at each step. From that day onwards, he was called Padmapada (the one whose feet were supported by lotuses).

One morning when Sankaracharya was returning after bathing in the Ganga, he found his path blocked by a Chandala (untouchable). Sankaracharya asked him to move away and the Chandala asked him "Do you want me to move my body or my spirit? You have said that the Absolute is everywhere, yet you shrink away from me because I am an untouchable." The Acharya at once realised his folly and begged the Chandala's forgiveness. He then composed five verses on the spot. To his surprise, the Chandala disappeared and in his place stood Lord Shiva who blessed him and directed him to remove all false values in life.

Sankaracharya decided to go to Badrikasram to write his teachings. From there, he came down to Kedarnath and Uttarkasi. When he was staying at Uttarkasi, an old Brahmin used to come to him daily to hold discussions with him. This went on for many days.

The lips of wisdom are closed except to the ear of understanding —
Vijay Corporation
2nd Floor, Ideal Industrial Estate, Tulsipipe Road
Lower Parel, Bombay – 400 013.

Sankaracharya soon realised that the Brahmin was no ordinary person and one day he asked him to disclose his identity. He was Bhagawan Veda Vyasa himself. The Acharya threw himself at the feet of the Guru of all Gurus. Sankaracharya was at that time, just sixteen years old, and his lifespan was coming to an end. However, Vyasa granted him another 16 years so that he could finish his work.

One day the Acharya heard that his mother was very sick and dying so he rushed home, remembering his promise to her. She was extremely happy to see her son. He sang a song in praise of Vishnu and his attendants came and took his mother's soul to Vaikunt, the place of eternal happiness.

From Kalady, Sankaracharya went to Sringeri, where he established his first Mutt. He had decided long ago that he should build his first Mutt here, when he had passed by this place ten years ago in search of a guru. He had been sitting under a tree when he saw some frogs basking in the sun on a stone. After some time, when it became too hot and they were about to jump back into the pond, a huge cobra came up behind them. Instead of attacking them, it spread its hood and provided shade for them. Sankara had been very much impressed by this. Later on, he found out that at this place, Maharishi Rishya Sringa had performed penance and long ago, his ashram had existed here. Sankaracharya had decided that if he ever built a Mutt, he would have it here.

After this, Sankaracharya went on a journey with some disciples to famous places of pilgrimage including Rameswaram, Sreerangam, Kancheepuram, Venkatachalam (modern Tirupati), Puri, Prayag, Kasi, Dwaraka, Haridwar, Ayodhya and Kedarnath. He then settled down at Kedarnath.

By this time, Sankaracharya was 32 years old. Knowing that his end was near, Sankaracharya advised his disciples how to carry on his work. He asked his four main disciples Padmapada, Suresvara, Hastaamalaka and Totaka to establish Mutts in the four corners of the country, that is at Jagannath Puri, Sringeri, Dwaraka, and Jyothirdham.

After this, he went into a deep samadhi. Through his yogic powers, he slowly changed himself into the five elements (air, water, fire earth, space). In this way, he disappeared from the world.

Sankaracharya did a lot for Hinduism. He believed that people should be united and that there should be no differences on account of religion, caste or language.

May the lamp of friendship be lighted with the oil of sincerity —
M/s. Quality Labs
Bombay — Bangalore.

SAD ON A BRIGHT DAY

By Y. Neeraja Murthy

ONE morning, when Queen Bee returned from her friend's house, she found all her worker bees buzzing around their cells. "What is the matter?" Queen Bee asked, "Why did you all come back from the garden? Why don't you go and get some honey from the flowers for yourselves?"

But the worker bees would not speak. They were all very sad. "What is the matter?" Queen Bee asked again. "Tell me my beloved children. Why don't you go and drink honey from the flowers? It is such a bright, sunny and beautiful day." The bees began to cry, "we will die and our children will perish with us too."

"No, no! What nasty words you utter," Queen Bee scolded them. "Tell me, my dears, what is the matter?"

"The flowers will not bloom for us. We cannot get any honey for our family and ourselves."

Queen Bee wiped the tears of her worker bees.

"Don't worry, don't worry", she told them and then Queen Bee flew to the flowers.

"Flowers, flowers, " Queen Bee enquired, "why don't you bloom? why are you so sad?"

But the flowers would not reply.

Their heads drooped and they gazed at the ground.

"What is the matter, dear flowers?" Queen Bee asked again.

"Tell me why don't you bloom? It is such a beautiful day today."

The flowers nodded their heads sadly and said, "we cannot bloom for the beautiful butterflies will not dance for us."

"Don't worry, don't worry," Queen Bee consoled them and flew to the butterflies.

The butterflies were hiding between the trees and plants. They were gloomy. "Butterflies, butterflies" Queen Bee said, "why are you so gloomy today? why don't you dance for the flowers? It is such a beautiful day." The butterflies fluttered

Take care of spare moments, they are the golden dust of time —

Indira Construction Pvt. Ltd

6, Oak Lane, Fort, Bombay– 400 001.

heir wings and said sadly, "we can't dance for the flowers because naughty children come to the garden and trap us in their bags. They crumble our tender wings and sometimes smash our heads."

"Don't worry, don't worry," Queen Bee said, "the children are naughty. They torture harmless creatures. But don't you worry; go and dance for the flowers. Be merry and enjoy yourselves. The bees will protect you from the children who harm you!"

So all the butterflies spread their beautiful wings and flew to the flowers. All the flowers, red and pink and yellow and blue, bloomed. When the naughty children came to catch the butterflies, the bees left their cell and buzzed around the garden with such a ferocious noise that all the children got frightened and ran away. The butterflies were very happy and they danced for every flower. The colourful flowers gazed towards the blue sky and smiled delightedly. The bees were also gay again. They went to every flower and sipped honey for their family and for themselves.

Dear Reader,

What do you have to say about brother? Do write (by July 15th) and tell us. The best article will be published in Bal Vihar.

Maya

Complete Happiness

An Australian nobleman owned a large mansion which was beautiful and well furnished. Outside were carved the letters, "This house will be presented to the man who is happy and contended in life." A few days later a man came claiming that he was the most happy and contended man in the world. The nobleman calmly replied. "If you are contended, why do you want to possess my house?" As the man could not answer, he sent him away.

By Sudhir Baliga

The Clever Thief

ONCE a thief wanted to steal some oranges. When he went to the tree he found seven guards around it. He passed by each of them promising that he would give each of them one less than half of what he plucked. So he plucked some oranges and when he passed all the guards he found that he had the same amount of oranges left. How many did he pluck?

By V. Shyam (13 years)

Solution on page no. 24

Service of humanity is service to God—

Shri Govindabhai K. Raja

63/F Napean Sea Road, Suvas Apartments, 4th Floor
Bombay – 400 006.

BIRTH OF RAMAYANA

By Anantha Narayanan

SAGE Valmiki, who had changed completely by the magic Mantra of Shri Rama, was living a saintly life of peace and joy in his Ashram. He was now naturally curious to know the meaning of the Mantra. Could it be the name of a person? If so, he was anxious to know more about him, who and where he was, his description and achievements.

Whenever there is such a thirst for the right knowledge, it is said that the teacher comes to one's door-step! As if in answer to his thoughts, as Valmiki was meditating on Shri Rama, Sage Narada, the wanderer of the three worlds, arrived in the Asbram.

Sage Narada was a great Saint, foremost amongst the learned. He delighted in austerities and the study of the scriptures. As one of the greatest devotees and messengers of the Lord, he sang and spread the glory of the Lord and helped many a devotee like Dhruva and Prahlada in their quest. From his life and experiences, Sage Narada has composed a beautiful guide on 'Devotion' (भक्ति) called "Narada Bhakthi Sutra."

Sage Valmiki was so over-joyed at having the Darshan of such a Holy Saint that, instead of asking the meaning of Shri Rama Mantra, he straight away asked Sage Narada:-

"Oh! Respected and all-knowing Sage Narada, who in this world today is full of merit and heroism, knower of Dharma, grateful, truthful and firm of vows?

Who is endowed with character, kind to all, wise and capable and extremely handsome?

Who is master of himself and has anger under his control? Who is brilliant and without envy? Whom do the Gods even fear when made rightly angry?

Sir, I am very curious to know this from you, as you are the fittest person to educate me."

Sage Narada knowing the purpose of the questions through his divine power, happily answered :-

"The many qualities that you have listed are rare indeed! Yes, there is one person who has these and many other virtues. He is none

An evil tongue pierces deeper than a spear —

Jolly & Maker

Maker Bhavan No. 2, New Marine Lines, Bombay–400 020

other than the Great Prince of Ayodhya, of the Ishvaku Dynasty—the Solar Race, known as Shri Rama to his darling subjects!" Sage Narada continued to paint the picture of Shri Rama, his many human qualities, glorious life and important achievements from His Avatara to Coronation!

The enchanted Sage Valmiki was overjoyed with gratitude to hear the story of Shri Rama, whose name had changed his life! Even after Sage Narada went away, Valmiki's mind was overflowing with the story he had heard.

One morning, the Sage along with his disciple left his Ashram to go to the River Tamasa for his bath and prayers. As he walked along, he was shocked by a pathetic sight. On the river bank he saw a pair of loving "Krauncha" birds (cranes) in a joyous mood. Alas, their joy was shortlived. For, the male bird fell bleeding, struck by an arrow from a cruel hunter. Seeing its beloved, smeared with blood and suffering in death's agony, the mate-the female bird-cried aloud in extreme sorrow.

Overcome by deep pity—Karuna (करुणा) and sorrow at this unexpected sight, the sage cursed the hunter:

मा निषाद प्रतिष्टांत्वम् आगमइशाश्तीस्समा: ।
यत् क्रौञ्च मिथुनादेकम् अवधी: काममोहितम् ।।

"Oh Hunter, you shall have no good name for endless years (you will also suffer) since you have killed one of the couple of "Krauncha" birds in love." Recovering from anger, he felt sorry that he had cursed the hunter so hastily, for thinking of his own past life, he felt that it was the duty of a hunter to hurt and kill without compassion. As he calmly thought of the curse, he was amazed to note that the words were not prose but poetry, with a rhythm. Strangely, his compassion and sorrow (शोक) had produced a verse (श्लोक) out of him! Considering all this to be the Grace of the Lord, Valmiki was in deep meditation. When he opened his eyes he saw Lord Brahma, the creator, before him who smilingly said :

"A verse indeed has been composed by you Through my will alone the Goddess of Speech (Saraswathi) has blessed you. Compose the story of the hero, Shri Rama, as you have heard from Narada. You will be blessed with the capacity to have the vision of all that had happened. You will also have the power to know even the thoughts and feelings of all the characters in the life and achievements of Shri Rama. With my grace and blessings, sing the glory for the benefit of mankind.'

Lord Brahma, further concluded : "As long as the hills stand and rivers flow on the surface of the globe, so long shall the story of the Ramayana be available in the world."

If you want to have peace with God, you must have peace with man, for God does not dwell in a heart full of hatred —

International Chemicals
Dadabhai Phalkey Road, Dadar, Bombay – 400 014.

Sage Valmiki, thereafter, composed the entire story in beautiful and simple poetry in 24,000 verses, in seven Kandas (volumes). He taught it to his disciples and thereafter the Royal Sons of Shri Rama, Lava and Kusha, sweetly sang and spread the glorious epic to the world.

Thus, the great Ramayana was born, as an अनुग्रहग्रन्थ with the Grace and Blessings of the Lord, out of compassion for humanity. True to Lord Brahma's words, even after thousands of years, the beautiful Ramayana is available to us today to teach and show us how, as humans, we can live happily at all times, following the path of Dharma.

We bow to Sage Valmiki and Lord Shri Rama : 'May they continue to bless and guide us in unfolding the Ramayana.'

THE AMAZING SPIDER

LONG before man invented the rope for hauling or tying, spiders were the masters of the art of "rope making." Here are some facts you may not know of nature's spinners. In the first place, spiders are found all over the world with the exception of the Arctic and Antarctic regions.

A spider is not an insect, as many people suppose, for it has eight legs and is a relation of the scorpion family. All spiders can make silk but not all species can build a web. It has been estimated that an ordinary garden spider will spin about 1000 feet of silk during its lifetime-as much as 30 yards or so in one session if necessary!

It is said that one pound of spider thread is enough to encircle the earth twice! If it were possible to make a one-inch thick rope from strands of spider web, it would be strong enough to lift a weight of 74 tons – this is roughly three times what one could expect from an ordinary first class rope.

A spider has five or six "spinerets" connected to its store of liquid silk. As the liquid silk is ejected from the spinerets, it hardens on contact with the air and becomes one single thread. Some spiders can produce four different kinds of threads and others up to seven. Some threads are specially for the outside of the web, some for the woven part and one kind is used for securing its luckless prey.

The web of one species of spider is used by natives for making fishing nets! One kind of spider uses a baited thread for luring its prey, whilst a spider found in Brazil makes a web by night and when morning comes, folds it up and carries it off!

By K. Chitra (12 *years*)

We have a right to work only, but never to its fruits —

Chinmaya Vidyalaya

Reddys' Hostel Building., Near State Bank of India, Adoni, A.P.

RAJASTHAN
A GALAXY OF VALOUR AND CHIVALRY

By Shamsuddin

RAJASTHAN, a land of hills and dales, rocks and springs, is a galaxy of unique valour and heroism. It is full legends of great warriors. On both sides of the great Aravalli mountains lie the old states of Udaipur, Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner etc. reminding us of the ancient glory and chivalry of brave Rajput rulers. A typical Rajput in churidar-pyjama and bright turban, a lady wrapped in a big round red ghaghra and rich yellow choli, the famous Ghoomer and Garba dances, the widely celebrated Gangaur and Teej festivals, the attractive forts, palaces and temples are the attractions of the colourful land of Rajasthan.

The heroic deeds of chivalry and unparalleled valour shown by the Rajputs and the nobility, the chastity and courage shown by their women have added to the glory of Indian history. Some of them who deserve special mention, and whose names will ever be written in golden letters in the pages of history are Rana Kumbha, Rana Sangram Singh, Rana Pratap, Prithviraj, Jaimal, Chand Bardai etc. Among women folk, Rani Padmini, Jodha Bai, Panna Bai, and Mira Bai are some of the unique figures glorifying the land of Rajasthan.

The challenging tower of Chittorgarh fort known as 'Vijay Stambha' was built by Rana Kumbha. It reminds us of the furious battles fought by the Rajputs. Rana Sangram Singh showed unusual skill and tact in uniting the Rajput army to wipe out the fury of Babar. Rana Pratap gave expression of his towering strength, courage and patience even in the midst of constant hardships and troublefs. Prithiviraj was known for his indomitable strength and valour and was never subdued. Their women folk too never remained behind. They not only joined hands with their husbands on the war field but displayed unique marks of honour, courage and self - sacrifice rarely found in the history of the world. Such great people have made Rajasthan famous.

The city of Jaipur is the most attractive place in Rajasthan. It was built by Savwai Jai Singh, the Kachhwa ruler in 1728. It was

Be hard with yourself and soft with others. Forgive all, but don't forgive yourself—

M/s. Balco

Unit No. 107, 1st Floor, A–Z Industrial Estate, Fergusson Road
Bombay – 400 013.

Tourists in the Amber Palace

planned and founded as per Hindu traditions. The city is surrounded by hills and enclosed by a wall with eight fine gateways. The rose-pink buildings look beautiful specially at sunset. It is for this reason that the city is popularly known as the 'Pink City of Jaipur'. The entrance to the city palace is through Tripoli gate in the south. Chandra Mahal, a seven storeyed construction with typical Rajput architecture is inside this palace. A fine collection of portraits of Jaipur princes, paintings, manuscripts of a Persian translation of Mahabharata by Abdul Fazl and microscopic editions of Geeta and Lingapurana and weapons used in warfare during Rajput times are found in Chandra Mahal.

The 'Hawa Mahal ' is another place of attraction in Jaipur. In the words of Sir Edwin Arnold, it is a 'vision of daring and dainty loveliness, nine storeys of rosy masonry and delicate over-hanging balconies and latticed windows, soaring with tier after tier of fanciful architecture in a pyramidal form, a very mountain of airy and audacious beauty...' This marvellous creation of rare architecture stands in the heart of the city, catching the attention of every traveller who visits the historic city of Jaipur.

Amber, the old capital of the former Jaipur state during the reign of Kachhwa Rajputs, lies 11 km. to the north-east of Jaipur. Though situated in a wilderness, it is well-known for fine rich carvings and old romantic palaces. As one enters the city one finds a big hall of public audience. The impressive gateway with a big image of Ganeshji is the centre of attraction in it. Another hall of mirrors minutely worked out here is unrivalled in beauty.

Jaipur, the historic city is a fine blending of the old and the new. Here one finds big business centres

It is better to understand a little, than to misunderstand a lot —
The Jai Hind Oil Mills Co.,
387 Narsi Natha Street, Bombay - 400 009.

as well as small industries, gorgeously dressed urban women as well as rural women-folk in simple dresses, highly developed latest cars as well as carts and camels so necessary in Rajasthan. Besides, Jaipur is famous for its gold enamelling, cutting of precious stones, marble statues, ivory work, dyed textiles, lac bangles, and finely painted pottery. Max Lerner was not wrong when he compared Jaipur with Venice and Paris and said, "I have seen Jaipur, and now I can die".

After Jaipur, we come across another city — Udaipur. This was founded by Maharana Udai Singh, father of Maharana Pratap in 1568 A. D.

The two island palaces 'Jag - Mandir' and 'Jag Niwas' found in the Pichola lake look like stars in the blue sky. It is said that Prince Khurram, who later became Emperor Shahjehan, took refuge in Jag Mandir while in exile. The Jag Niwas palace is now converted into a luxurious hotel.

The fort of Chittor which had seen the courage and valour of Rajputs and their women, stands on a rock about 500 ft. above the plains. Within this fort can be seen the town of Chittorgarh with palaces, temples, and other buildings of historical importance. The 'Jai Stambha' erected by Rana Kumbha in honour of his victory over the Sultan Malwa, stands firm here even today. Col. Tod, while writing the Annals of Rajasthan has compared the Kutub Minar of Delhi to it and said, "It is of a very inferior character when compared with the Jai Stambha." The palaces of Rana Kumbha and lovely Rani Padmini whom Alauddin saw in a mirror, are also found here.

Ajmer is another city of attraction in Rajasthan. The 'Rajputana Museum' accommodated in a palace built by Akbar, is a beautiful combination of Hindu and Muslim architecture. It is here that Akbar built the Dargah of Khwaja Sahib which is regarded as the most sacred shrine of Muslims in India. Besides Muslims, people of other communities including Hindus, go to worship at the Dargah.

Besides, there are a number of other places such as Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jaisalmer and Bharatpur etc., which tell the same story of the valour and chivalry of Rajputs and crown Rajasthan with a glory unparalleled in the history of the world.

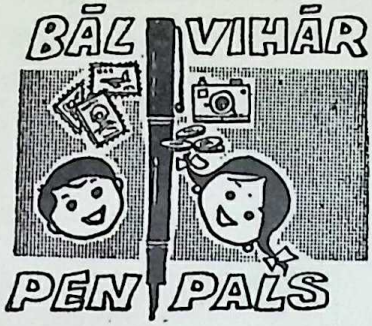
Do you want Pen Pals?

If you do, please send us your name, age, address and hobbies. We will publish them in the Pen Pals column.

The remedy for weakness is not brooding over weakness but thinking of strength —

India Electronic and Engineering Industries

Unit No. 52, Shah Industrial Estate, Deonar, Bombay – 400 088.



319/79 S. K. Bajaj
(16 years)
Bajaj Agencies
Pusad (Yeotmal)
Maharashtra.

Hobbies : Penfriendship, reading and collecting coins.

320/79 Manish R. Parikh
(10 years)
C/o R. K. Parikh
Rajkamal
951, Sarkhej Road,
Opp : Jain Merchants' Society,
Ahmedabad — 380 007.

Hobbies : Collecting stamps, coins, coloured view cards, stickers, painting, and penfriendship.

321/79 Sunil V. Dharmani
(16 years)
22/12-C, L. S. Nagar
Gandhidham 370 201.
Dist. Kutch
Gujarat.

Hobbies : Cricket, table tennis, collecting stamps and photography.

KRISHNAPURAM SCULPTURES

Contd. from page no. 8

us of the valour of Karna who was nearly the equal of Arjuna.

The statue of Rathi, Goddess of love, seated on the swan, is a splendid one. She is admiring herself with perfect self-satisfaction, in the mirror she holds! The sculpture speaks volumes about feminine grace and vanity!

There is another remarkable carving. The sculptor has combined an elephant and a bull. On the left is the elephant with its trunk raised. On the right is the bull. The eyes are common; the lip of the elephant corresponds with the ear of the bull and the lifted trunk forms the hump of the bull. The two animals are thus interlocked in an attractive and skilful manner. We will see such artistic innovations in a few other places also.

It needs courage to keep the flag of faith flying,
when there is so much doubt and distrust in this world —
With Best Compliments from
Lekha, Seema and Chitra
(Cannanore Bala Vihar members)

CRICKET—
VENKATRAGHAVAN - THE GENTLEMAN CAPTAIN

Hello Sportslovers!

Behind Srinivas Venkatraghavan's rise to India's captaincy is the tale of patience and perseverance. His career would inspire even the famous spider that taught King Bruce the valuable lesson "of never giving up!"

He played in his very first Test on his home pitch at Madras in 1965 against John Reid's New Zealanders. By the end of the series, he had taken more wickets than any other bowler (21 wickets at the average of 19 runs per wicket). Just as it appeared as if he had found a permanent place in the Indian team, his career was threatened by the coming back of the great Prasanna.

There was keen competition between the two for the offspinner's place in the team. Prasanna soon became the first choice, and Venkatraghavan toiled under his shadow for many seasons. Venkatraghavan who was once India's vice-captain, was dropped from the Indian team. And yet he never gave up.

The virtual retirement of Prasanna gave Venkatraghavan one more chance to prove his worth. And like the fine gully fielder he is, Venkatraghavan seized the "chance" with both hands.

Venkatraghavan teaching his eldest son Vikram how to bat Photo: Courtesy Sportsweek

Tall and lean Venkatraghavan is extremely fit. He is also the master

Next month – The Three "T's" of Sunil Gavaskar with a special autograph to all Bal Vihar readers.

of "line and length." He can bowl long spells and change his bowling style to suit both the occasion and the strength or weakness of the opposition. Thus he bowls flat and "tight" if India has to save runs. But on the other hand, if the pitch is helpful and India is in a good position, he flights the ball to tempt the batsman into hitting and thus getting out.

Unfortunately for both India and himself, Venkatraghavan's batting has not been as consistent as it could be. With more effort, he could easily be a genuine allrounder. For he certainly has the technique to be a much better batsman than his record shows.

Venkatraghavan, who turned 34 on the 21st of April is easily the best Indian fielder in the close-catching positions. He has taken many amazing and brilliant catches at his favourite position of gully.

Soft spoken, polite and blessed with a good personality and the ability to think on his feet, Venkatraghavan is an ideal captain. If India does not do well in England, it will neither be for want of thinking nor trying on the part of India's captain, Venkatraghavan.

— *Bharat Savur*

Group photo of Bala Vihar Children with Br. Yoga Chaithanya taken at Mahindra Nagar, Malad on 28-4-79.

CAN YOU SOLVE THESE PUZZLES?

1. You are given three cans. One can hold 10 litres of water; the other two can hold seven and three litres. The can which can hold 10 litres is full, the other two cans are empty. How will you pour exactly five litres into the seven-litre can, from the ten litre can which is full, by using the three-litre can? There are no measurements given on any can.
2. Can you make a sentence in which 'because' come thrice in a row?

Answers on page no. 24

NEW BALA VIHAR FORMED

During the recent Geeta Gnana Yagna in Malayalam by Brahmachari Yoga Chaithanya at Mahindranagar, Malad (from 19-4-79 to 29-4-79) children from the colony used to meet the Brahmachari from 10-30 a.m. to 12 noon. He used to teach them bhajans, kirtans, and Puranic stories. After a few days, the children were interested in joining the Bala Vihar and thus a new Bala Vihar was formed. The Brahmachari gave a test and essay competition. All of them wrote very well. However among them the essay written by Kumari Savita B. was declared the best.

THE SLY FOX

ONCE upon a time, there was a fox. One day he went in search of food. He could not find anything. Desperate and weary, he wandered in the forest. In the woods, there was an old well. It was covered with creepers and bushes. While moving about aimlessly the fox happened to come that way and he fell into the well. It was too deep for him to jump out. He tried his best to come out but in vain.

Then he saw a goat grazing on the ground. He cried out. "How sweet! How sweet!" Puzzled, the goat came near the well. "What is sweet? What are you doing there?" she asked. The fox replied "Dear friend, please come in. Let us enjoy the sweet water." Hearing the fox's words the goat jumped into the well. Promptly the fox climbed on the back of the goat and jumped out of the well. Having reached the ground, he said to the goat, "Dear friend, enjoy the sweet water and let me enjoy the beauty of the forest. Goodbye!" Saying this, the fox went on his way.

By N. Sukumaran (12 years)

ANSWERS TO PUZZLES

1. First fill the can which can hold three litres. Then pour it into the can which can hold seven litres. Again fill the three-litre can and pour it into the seven-litre can. Now there are six litres in the seven-litre can and four litres in the ten-litre can. Then again take three litres from the ten-litre can and fill the seven litre can. Now two litres remain in the three-litre can. Now pour all the seven litres into the ten-litre can and pour the two litres which are in the three-litre can into the seven-litre can. Again take three litres from the ten-litre can and pour it into the seven-litre can. There are now five litres in the seven-litre can.

2. No sentence will end with because because because is a connecting word.

By P. Pavan Cariappa
(Chinmaya Vidyalaya, Ernakulam)

Solution to the Clever Thief

Only two.

A thankful heart is not only the greatest virtue but the parent of all virtues—

Jafkay Engineering Corporation

A–21, Marol, MIDC Industrial Estate, Bombay – 400 059.

THE WORLD OF SILENCE

By Uma Raman

LITTLE Anil was a clever boy. He always used to stand first in his class. He was also helpful and was loved by everyone. In fact, he was the most popular boy.

One day when Anil was seven years old, he became very very ill. He was so ill that he had to be put in the hospital. The doctor said that he had a very bad disease called meningitis.

After some time, Anil started getting better. He used to take his medicines every day. But, as Anil became better and better, he found that he could not hear. When anyone spoke to him, he did not know, because he could not hear.

Anil's parents thought that it was because of his illness. They thought that as he got better, he would start hearing again. But, as days went by, Anil still could not hear. He had become totally deaf.

There are many such children in India. Some children are born deaf and some become deaf because of accidents or serious illnesses. It is said that there are about 14 crores of deaf people in India.

Some deaf children cannot talk. Actually, there is nothing wrong with the child's tongue or lips. But, because they cannot hear, they do not know what is being said. Hence they cannot talk.

Other children are the deaf child's best teachers. They can teach him to talk by means of lip-reading. If the deaf child mixes with hearing children, he learns to talk. There is less and less need to use signs and gestures.

When he lip-reads, the deaf child sees how a person's mouth moves when he is speaking. In this way he tries to make out what word has just been said.

All of us lip-read to a certain extent. We watch the speaker's face when he is talking. We understand better when we see a person talking. This is because we can see and hear what he is saying.

Just like us, the deaf children also use lip-reading in their day-to-day life. You too can help your deaf friend to talk. Here are a few points to keep in mind.

Do not cover any part of your face when you talk to him. Let him 'see' you talking.

Do not tease or make fun of him even if he has a hearing aid. Also, do not fool with his hearing aid.

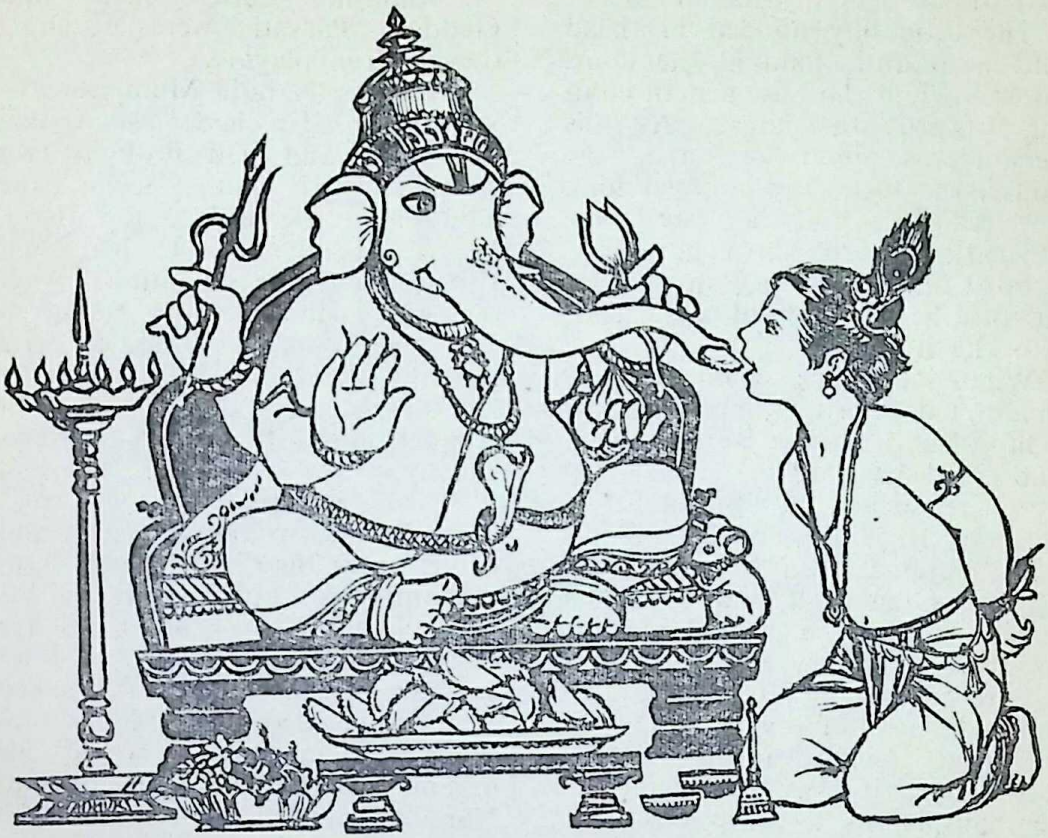
Allow him to play with you. This will help him not to feel shy or afraid.

If given a chance, the deaf child can do just as well as or even better than his friends. Give him that chance.

Love is not love if it does not serve and sacrifice —
With Prem and Om
Chinmaya Family, Kuwait

The Stories About Lord Ganesh

By Chitra Rao



Lord Ganesh is one of the most popular Hindu Gods. He is known throughout the world. He is also called Vinayak, which means 'remover of obstacles.' This is probably why people pray to him before beginning any new venture. Chitra Rao relates some of the stories which have been handed down through the generations about this elephant-headed-God.

Once upon a time, Lord Shiva was away when Goddess Parvati wanted to have a bath. But she was worried in case someone walked into the house when she was bathing. She soon found a way to solve

If you want to prove God, improve yourself. That is the only method —
Indira Construction Pvt. Ltd.
6 Oak Lane, Fort, Bombay-400 001.

this problem. She made a clay image of a little boy and gave it life.

She then told the boy 'I am going for my bath. Stand at the door and don't let anyone in'.

The little boy nodded his head and went and stood at the door. After a while, he saw a man coming towards the house. As this person was about to enter the house, the little boy stopped him, not realising that he was none other than Lord Shiva himself.

Lord Shiva was very angry. He cut off the boy's head and strode into the house.

When Parvati came out and saw the boy dead, she was very upset. "Oh, what happened!", she cried, "how did he die?"

"He tried to stop me as I was entering the house, so I cut off his head" replied Lord Shiva.

"But, I had told him not to let anyone in. Please bring him back to life", cried Parvati.

Lord Shiva sent some of his men to get the head of anyone lying with his head facing north. During those days, it was considered to be inauspicious to sleep this way. The men looked everywhere, but could not find anyone. At last they found an elephant with its head facing north. They cut off it's head and took it to Lord Shiva, who fixed it on the boy's shoulders and brought him to life again. This is one of the most popular stories of Lord Ganesh.

Another story is about Ganesh and his brother. Once Ganesh and his brother Kumar were playing in the courtyard of their house in Kailash. Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati were watching the children playing.

Just then, Narada Muni came to visit them. He had just visited the earth, and had brought two mangoes with him. Seeing the children, he decided to test them. He called out "Come here and I'll set you a competition. Anyone who wins it, will be given this mango as a prize", he said showing them one fruit, while he hid the other. "What sort of competition is it?" asked the boys eagerly.

"I will give this mango to anyone who goes round the earth and comes here first", he announced.

Kumar at once set out on his peacock but Ganesh did not move at all. "What is the matter, don't you want the mango?" asked Narada, puzzled. Ganesh did not reply. He just went round his parents once, and turning to Narada, said "I have won the competition, please give me the mango".

"But, how can it be?" asked Narada, surprised at his words "you have not gone round the earth".

"Lord Shiva and Goddess Parvati are my parents. The three worlds—the Earth, the Heaven and the Hell

Conduct shines when it is inforced and not enforced—

Quality Labs
Bombay—Bangalore.

reside in them. So I have not only gone round the Earth but also Heaven and Hell," explained Ganesh.

Narada was forced to admit that Ganesh was right . As he was handing him the fruit, Kumar came back having circled the earth.

"How can he win, when he hasn't even started?", he asked angrily. Narada then explained what had happened and Kumar too had to admit that Ganesh was the winner.

"Anyway, do not be disappointed. Here is a fruit for you too", he said showing him the hidden fruit.

Once Ganesh was returning from a feast at Brahma's house. He had eaten a lot and being unable to walk, was riding home on a mouse, which scampered past him.

As he was going on his way, he slipped off the mouse and fell on the road. "Ha! Ha!" the moon laughed at him. Ganesh was very angry when he heard the moon laugh. He cursed him saying "Nobody will look at your face on the auspicious day of Ganesh Chaturthi. Whoever looks at you will be accused of theft".

For this reason even to this day, people do not look at the moon on Ganesh Chaturthi. If anyone unfortunately sees the moon, he has to see 21 idols of the Lord to avoid this curse.

Once during Divali, Yashoda, Krishna's mother, had made some karanjis (sweets) as prasad for the puja. She had to go out urgently. "Please look after these sweets while I am gone and don't you eat any of them", she told Krishna, placing the sweets in the puja ghar.

Krishna nodded his head. But when he looked at the sweets, his mouth started watering. Yashoda, not trusting her son to keep away from the sweets, tied his hands behind his back. Poor Krishna. How he longed to taste the sweets! His desire was fulfilled soon enough. The idol of Lord Ganesh came to life. He stretched his trunk, picked up the sweets and put them into Krishna's mouth.

Besides these, there are many more stories about Lord Ganesh. Naturally, the more popular the deity, the more stories there are about him.

The Tide of Fortune

By Krishna Kumar (15 years)

ONCE there lived a rich man. One day, a sage came to him and said: "All your wealth will become the wealth of your neighbour." On hearing this, the rich man was astonished and sad. His neighbour was poor. The rich man wondered how to escape from his bad luck.

At last he got an idea. He sold all his wealth and bought a diamond for the price. He put the diamond in a secret bag in his cap. He was happy that no one would be able to take away his wealth.

One day, he had to go to his relative's house. He had to cross a sea. When the boat reached the middle of the sea, there was a storm and it turned over. Somehow he was able to reach the island. When he reached the island, he looked for the cap, but he was not able to find it.

One day the rich man's neighbour caught a fish. When he cut it, he found the diamond inside. Thus he got the diamond which the rich man had tried to keep away from him.

A WEB OF DISEASES

By Dr. Anil U. Lakhani

Smallpox can lead to as severe a complication as blindness. To save ourselves from this dreadful disease we should get ourselves vaccinated.

MUMPS :

Mumps are caused due to infection of the salivary glands, which are situated within our mouth cavity. At first we only experience a slight stiffness and pain on moving our jaws and discomfort whilst eating. Then the glands swell up on one side of the face or both, depending on the side affected. It is usually accompanied by fever and lasts for a week. We should have complete rest and have only liquid diet.

WHOOPING-COUGH :

It usually affects us before the age of ten. Fifty percent of the cases occur in children under four years of age. It is more common in females. It is caused by an organism named 'Himophilus-pertusis.' It has derived its name from the peculiar crowing sound (called whoop), that an affected child makes at the end of the violent fits of cough. Sometimes it is so severe that the colour of the face turns to red or black. The cough usually ends in vomiting or bringing out of thick mucus. It is said to aggravate any tubercular infection which has previously affected us. Due to the force of the cough we can develop hernias. A child should be given its food in between the fits of cough.

IMMUNIZATION :

This is the name given to the normal schedule of vaccinations, which help us to prevent many of these infectious diseases. For example, we should have smallpox vaccinations whenever they are given in school.

Thus a little knowledge of diseases which can affect us, will help us to take steps for their prevention and make us bear them with more courage and understanding whenever they attack us.

Concluded

Wise men are instructed by reason, men of less understanding by experience, the most ignorant by necessity, and the beasts by nature—

Polyplastics Corporation

105-106, A—Z Industrial Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg
Lower Parel, Bombay-400 013.

The Foolish Friend

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala

In the last issue, you read how the prince and his two friends with their jewels, escaped from the Bhil village because the clever enemy gave up his life for them. That is why it is said :

The robber for his victims died
Better the sensible enemy than
The foolish friend.

This story is of a foolish friend.

THE prince and his friends having quickly left the Bhil village, came to a big city. They sold their gems and collected a lot of money. Then the prince found out that the king of that city was a lazy person. So the prince bought elephants, horses, bows and arrows, and hired many soldiers. He attacked the King's castle. In the battle, the lazy King was killed.

Thus the prince became the King of the beautiful city. He made his own two friends his ministers. His friends governed the country so well that in a short time the King, their master, became very prosperous.

Being rich enabled the king to plant beautiful gardens and parks, build summer palaces and houses. In course of time, he married a pretty princess from the neighbouring kingdom and made her his Queen. They led a life of luxury.

The King being fond of pets, many types of animals were kept in his favourite garden. Deer gambolled, mynas sang, parrots chattered, and the small goats roamed among the trees. The King and the Queen often spent their afternoons in a bower in the middle of the garden. One day in the market place the King saw a monkey dancing to the music

played by his master on the flute. This amused the King so much that he bought the monkey immediately. With the passing of each day the King became more and more fond of his new playful pet. Finally, much against the advice of his Ministers, the King made the monkey his official sword bearer. Wherever the King went, the monkey followed him with the sword. The monkey became very proud and used to tease all the lords and the courtiers. He would pull their turbans, pinch them, steal their fruits and sweets, but no one dared complain to the King about the monkey. Days passed and the monkey become more impudent.

When the springtime came, the gardens and the parks became all the more delightful. The King and the Queen started spending a lot of time in the gardens. The monkey was always close by with the King's sword.

One afternoon the King whilst walking in the garden felt tired. He told the monkey, "I shall rest and sleep in the arbour. You must keep watch to prevent anyone from disturbing me." Saying this he fell asleep.

Shortly, a bee, drawn by the fragrance of the flowers hovered over the King and alighted on his forehead. The monkey shooed off the bee. But the bee persisted. The monkey became angry. He said to himself, "What! Under my eyes, this insolent creature looks upon the King." He again tried to drive away the bee—but without success. Blind with rage, the monkey drew forth the sword, and struck a blow at the bee sitting on the King's forehead—the blow split the King's head.

Just then the Queen came into the bower. Seeing the bloody sight, she cried in anguish, "You fool. You stupid monkey, the King trusted you. How could you do such a terrible thing?"

The monkey told her what had happened. After this, everybody scolded and shunned him.

WHO AM I?

1. I am a continent. The Atlantic ocean touches me. The Mediterranean sea and the Red seas are near me. The Indian ocean also touches me. Which continent am I?

2. I am a lake. I am near the Equator. My name is the same as that of one of England's famous queens. There are eight letters in my name. Which lake am I?

3. I am an important canal. I separate one continent from another. I am not the Panama canal. Which canal am I?

4. I am a desert. I am in West Africa. Which desert am I?

by Ritu Vashistha

Answers on page 27

Think!

A strong man is one who faces facts. He is weak who wants to escape from them.

—Swami Chinmayananda

In life, we come across many difficulties. The reaction of a strong person is to face them squarely and thus overcome them. But a weak person tries to "run away" from them. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given "a surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Bal Vihar. The last date for sendingin entries is September 15th, so send in your entry soon.

The Winner!

The winner of the thought for the month of May is N. Anant Rao of Puri (12 years). Congratulations! Please send us your full address so that we can post your gift, a Bal Bhagavatam.

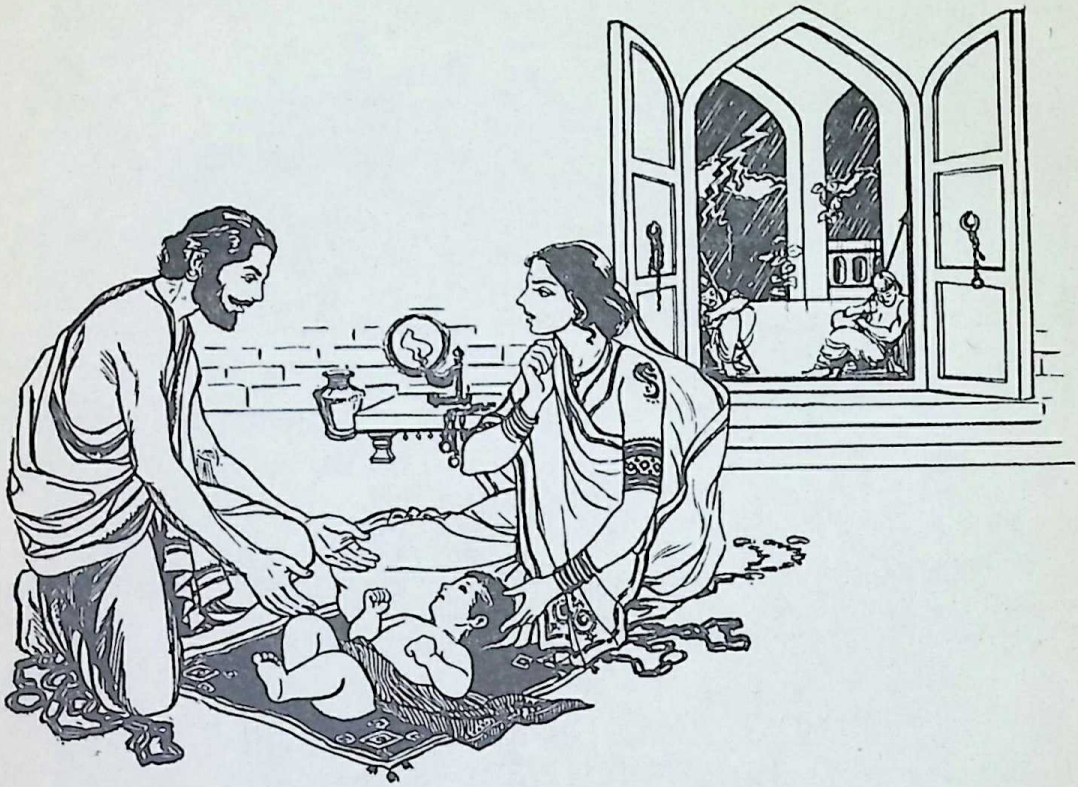
True loving is not a passive 'taking' but a dynamic 'giving'

Love is the filling from one's own,
Another's cup,
Love is the daily laying down
And taking up;
A choosing of stony path
Through each new day
That other feet may tread with ease
A smoother way;
Love is not blind, but looks abroad
Through other eyes,
And asks not 'Must I give' but
"May I sacrifice?"

GOKULASHTAMI

Why we celebrate it

By Br. Vishwa Chaitanya



AT the birth of a baby in our home we all rejoice. Can we imagine the joy at the birth of a child whom the entire universe welcomed?

It did happen a few thousand years ago. And that divine birth took place in our country—the birth of our beloved boy of Brindavan. An unearthly voice predicted that he would put an end to Kamsa, the tyrant king of Mathura. So as a precautionary measure against any unpleasant event, the cruel Kamsa had his sister Devaki and Vasudeva imprisoned and all the six children born to Devaki brutally butchered. Balarama, the seventh was saved by a miracle. Now it was the turn of the eighth child, who was prophesied to be the life taker of Kamsa. So the security arrangements were strengthened. Kamsa employed all his skill to see that escape was impossible. The imprisoned couple lay bound

hands and legs in a dark chamber of the Mathura jail.

In the pitch dark midnight of Krishnashtami, it rained heavily. Lulled by the pattering rain, the guards soon fell asleep. Devaki realized that the hour had come. The baby was born. Suddenly, a miracle happened — the chains snapped, the doors lay open with the guards snoring away! The boy started speaking to the extreme surprise of the couple. They couldn't believe it. "Take me to Gokul, to Nanda's house", he said. Nanda was the head of the neighbouring province. "You will find a girl child born just now. Place me there and bring her here".

Vasudeva, without any hesitation, took up the child and acted upon the commandment. With no obstacle in the way, he reached the banks of the Jamuna. The flooded river, as if obeying some supreme order, at once lowered her level and let him easily wade through her waters. Everything was done in no time. Vasudeva, having placed the Lord in Yashoda's bed, brought back the girl to Mathura.

As soon as the news of the birth reached Kamsa, he rushed to the spot to destroy the girl. When he lifted her by her legs to dash her against a stone, she mysteriously slipped out of his hands and rose up in the sky, saying "O cruel Kamsa, I am not your destroyer. Your real destroyer is born elsewhere. Beware!" So saying, she disappeared. She was Goddess Lakshmi herself.

At the same time, the entire Gokul woke up to see the divine child. Everyone there went about merrily announcing the news. The village wore a festive look. All proclaimed the arrival of an Avatar.

The news spread far and wide like wild fire. The good heaved a sigh of relief. Their saviour had come . The news struck terror in the hearts of the wicked. Their days were numbered.

Every year Krishnashtami (Janmaashtami or Gokulashtami) comes to remind us of this divine descent. This year, it falls on Thursday, August 16th. How can we best celebrate this auspicious day? The wise say that this day is a golden opportunity to let 'Krishna' take birth in the minds of each one of us. He is the Lord, the fountainhead of all the virtues. There is no better and greater way of observing this auspicious day.

CALLING ALL READERS !

Do you have a problem? If you do, please write and tell us. We shall try and solve it. Remember two heads are better than one, so don't worry. Write a letter and pass your worries on to us.

You need not be afraid about your name being published. If you don't want your name to appear in Bal Vihar please write and tell us and we shall not disclose it.

"I want to become a member right now. I've not played with toys when I was young. Now I have them, I am very happy," said Rajesh, 11, looking in wonderment at nearly 800 toys in a room. In a corner of the toy library, Javeet, Raju, Prasad, Munita, and almost to a standstill. It has now been revived by the Lions Club of North Bombay as one of its programmes for children in the International Year of the Child.

Children upto 14 years of age and residing in Bandra and Khar can become members of this library.

Toy library at Bandra

By Lalogue

Peter were boisterously playing the indoor football game, while many others were excitedly examining various toys.

In the midst of this youthful confusion, Shri Mohanlal Piramal formally inaugurated the Children's Educational Toys Library Project (Chacha Nehru Toys Library) of the Lions Club of North Bombay at Petit Municipal School, Bandra on Sunday, June 3, 1979 at 10 a.m.

It was in 1934 that the first toy library was established in Los Angeles (U.S.A.). Its popularity inspired many other nations all over the world. In India, the first toy library was started in Delhi on January 25, 1965 under the auspices of Share Your Toys Foundation, Shri Veerandra Adhiya being its founder member. Through the efforts of Mrs. Kumudini Patkar, the Chacha Nehru Toy Library was set up in Bombay in July 1966. Over the years many toys have been gifted to this library by Denmark, Canada, Germany, England & Japan.

Unfortunately, the heavy breakage of toys by poor handling and lack of funds for replacement brought the activities of the library

The monthly fee of Rs. 2, with Rs. 20/- as deposit and Rs. 5/- as admission fee, enables a child to borrow two toys per week.

Toys can be kept for a maximum period of two weeks. The library functions once a week on every Sunday between 9 and 11.30 a.m. This library will prove a boon to parents as well since many of them cannot afford to buy expensive toys for their children.

Several companies such as Shakti Toys, Arora Hasbro, Blow Plast, Nanavati Toys and Surajmal Jewellers have given toys and donations.

Voltas Limited has donated a number of educational toys, manufactured by Kaybee School Equipment Manufacturing Company, Hyderabad. Kaybee is one of the only two licensed units in the world to manufacture Montessori equipment. Its products conform to the strict specifications laid down by the Association Montessori International, Amsterdam.

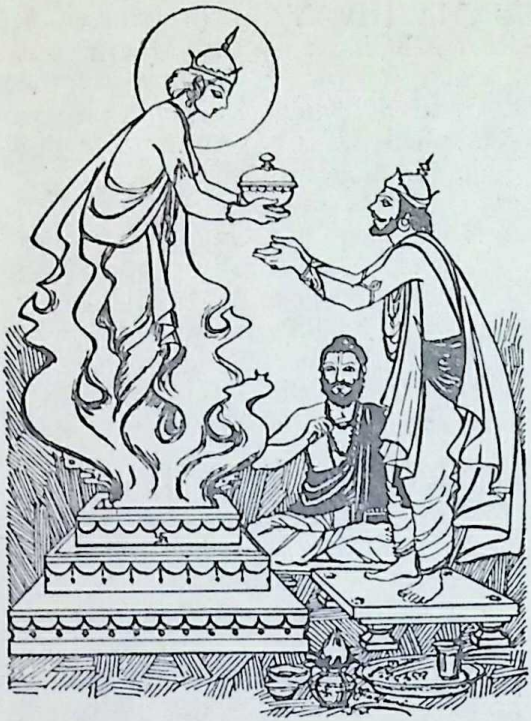
The Montessori method imparts learning through recreation. The school equipment is therefore designed to develop the various

Contd. on page 28

RAMAYANA

SRI RAMA AVATAR (Contd.)

By Anantha Narayanan



The poet takes us back to Ayodhya. When the Yagna was coming to a close with the final offering of ghee in the fire to Lord Vishnu, there appeared from the flames a bright and brilliant Deva with a golden vessel in his hands! Addressing Dasaratha, he said "The gods are fully satisfied with your devotion and offerings and have sent this Divine payasam (kheer) for your wive.. When they drink the Prasad, your desire will be fulfilled and you will be blessed with four sons". Handing over the vessel to the King, the Deva disappeared.

Overcome by supreme joy and receiving the payasam with full devotion, Dasaratha distributed it to his wives as instructed. Half of the payasam was given to Kausalya (1/2) and half of what remained (1/4) to Sumitra. Half of the balance (1/8) was taken by Kaikeyi and the remaining share (1/8) was again given to Sumitra, who got two shares.

In course of time, on the auspicious Navami (9th lunar day) of the month of Chaitra, Mother Kausalya (the eldest wife of Dasaratha) gave birth to a highly blessed son named Sri Rama, who represented part of Lord Vishnu. The child was very beautiful and radiant with auspicious marks. Next, through Kaikeyi (the youngest wife of Dasaratha) was born another beautiful son, Bharatha. Then Sumitra (the second wife) gave birth to two brave sons, Lakshmana and Shatrugna.

Thus, the Lord descended as a human on earth for the protection of the good, the destruction of the wicked and to establish Dharma by his own life and actions!

King Dasaratha's joy knew no bounds! There was immense rejoicing both in the Heavens and in Ayodhya on this unique, auspicious, occasion.

It is this grand festival that we celebrate, even now, as the sacred Sri Rama Navami, so that we may be blessed and guided by the Lord to keep to the path of Dharma, at all times!

SRI RAMA'S CHILDHOOD & EDUCATION

THE immediate object of the human Avatar of the Lord, as the son of King Dasaratha, was to protect the Devas from the tyranny of Ravana. God helps those who help themselves. Even the Devas are no exception to this rule. Hence, to serve Sri Rama, the Devas by their power caused the birth of the monkey chiefs in Kishkinda.

King Dasaratha shared his ecstasy with his people by distributing riches and plenty of cows. It will be interesting to note that even thousands of years before, cattle wealth, especially the cow, formed an important part of our national wealth. Bharat, being mainly an agricultural country, protected and promoted the growth of cows. The cow was and continues to be the source of the essential milk and milk products and also the provider of the bulls for ploughing the field and dung as manure for the development of agriculture. Plenty of cows were always distributed freely on such joyous occasions.

The supremely delighted Sage Vasishta, on behalf of the King, performed the naming ceremony (नामकरण) of the boys. He named Kausalya's son, the eldest Sri Rama, Kaikeyi's son, Bharatha, the first son of Sumitra, Lakhsmana and the other Shatrugna.

The name Rama is a combination of the two letters Ra (रा) and Ma (म) which are the life-letters of the mantras of Lord Narayana and Lord Shiva-NAMO-NARAYANA (नमोनारायणाय) NAMASHIVAYA (नमशिवाय). Rama Mantra is also known as Taraka (तारक) Mantra by the devoted chanting of which a person is purified and gets over all problems. This happened in the case of the author of Ramayana, Sage Valmiki.

Hinduism is a way of life. In every aspect of life—birth, growth and development — spirituality serves as the background of all activities. Hence, as the four princes of Ayodhya grew up, King Dasaratha, with the blessings of his Guru, Sage Vasishta, performed the various purificatory rituals, from time to time. called 'Samskaras,' (संस्कार) starting with 'Namakarana' upto 'Upanayanam'—initiation of the Gayatri Mantra — as a preparation for regular education, both worldly and higher. These Samskaras contributed to the all-round development of the personality of the princes.

Sri Rama was very handsome with auspicious marks, eyes tinged with red like lotus. He had red lips and a deep resonant voice. Bharatha was cheerful, valorous and had divine virtues. Lakshmana and Shatrugna were valiant and skilled in the use of all missiles. Endowed with virtues, all of them resembled

Culture expresses itself in thought, word and deed—
Jolly & Maker
Maker Bhavan No. 2, New Marine Lines, Bombay 400 020.

one another and shone like four bright stars!

All the four princes turned out to be masters of the Vedas. They were great heroes and were always intent on doing good to the people. All of them acquired wisdom and were adorned with many virtues.

They were well trained in the art of riding horses, elephants and driving chariots. They delighted in and mastered the science of archery.

With all the learning and achievements, they were still humble and had great reverence for their teachers and served King Dasaratha with devotion. Thus, even from childhood, though born as rich princes in a great and noble family, they showed their gratitude to their parents (मातृभक्ति-पितृभक्ति) and teachers (आचार्य भक्ति) by their devoted service.

Sri Rama, holding high the greatness of the Ikshvaku race like a flag, excelled all the brothers and proved to be the delight of his parents by his conduct. He was exceptionally glorious and possessed unfailing prowess. He was the beloved of the people like the full moon in a clear sky and was, therefore, lovingly called Ramachandra (रामचंद्र) by all.

Though the four brothers were affectionately devoted to one another, they grouped themselves in two pairs-Sri Rama and Lakshmana-Bharatha and Shatrugna. Lakshmana, rich in splendour, was very deeply attached to Sri Rama and served him in every way. They were inseparable and Lakshmana was like a second life of Sri Rama moving outside his body (भ्रातृभक्ति) Sri Rama too, in his love for Lakshmana, did not even eat or sleep without him.

Similarly, Shatrugna, the younger brother of Lakshmana was dearer to Bharatha than his own life. Bharatha too was equally dear to him.

The growth, education and behaviour of the princes added to the delight of King Dasaratha and the blessed queens.

To be contd.

The links of a chain

By Bishan Swaroop Aggarwal

A king sat in his palace observing the bazar outside. He saw a saint passing through it. The king humbly asked "O Saint, you are very honest. Please let me know why God made some people rich and others poor." The Saint replied, "Had God made all people equal and alike, how could you be a king and another a beggar? Not only this, had all people prospered in the same way, why would one serve the other? The result would have been that the patient would not find a doctor, the naked would not get cloth, the farmers would not sow and reap harvests. How then could we get foodgrains in the market? It is all God's ingenuity. Like the links of a chain, He has attached one with the other and everybody goes on working in this way."

Calicut Bala Vihars Get Together

During the Geeta Gyana Yagna conducted in May at Zamorin's High School, Calicut, an entertainment programme was organised by all the Bala Vihars of Calicut.

Among the various items presented was a Bharat Natyam dance by Sujata, the talented daughter of Mr.G.S.Sreekrishnan, programme executive of All India Radio, Kozhikode (Kerala). Here she is seen with Swami Dayananda Saraswathi, who blessed the children.

THE JUDGEMENT

By G. Priya

(Santacruz East Bala Vihar)

Solomon, the wise king, could solve any case of any nature. But one day, there was a very odd case. Two women stood in the court of Solomon, and both of them claimed that the child lying in front was theirs. The court was full of audience, silently waiting for the decision. But Solomon was quiet, and was in deep thought to arrive at the correct decision.

Suddenly, he called one of his courtiers, and ordered him to get a sharp sword. Everyone was astonished. He told the two women that the child would be cut into two pieces and each one would take one piece. He further added that they should decide which portion, either the head or the legs, each one would like to have. One of the women agreed to it and wanted the top portion of the child, but the other cried out and requested the king not to cut the child, but to hand it over to the other woman. On hearing this, Solomon, the wise king declared that the latter was the real mother of the child for she did not want the child to be cut. The king then handed over the child to the real mother and sent the other to jail.

Everybody exists. It is only the few who live, because to live, you should have an ideal —

With Prem and Om
Chinmaya Family, Kuwait.

BHARAT DARSHAN
ENKAN MURUGAN

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

TO-day, I am taking you to a beautiful temple I visited recently, in Tanjore District. There are innumerable grand temples in this district, which is considered the 'Granary of the South'. Do you know why? The river Kauveri enriches this region and the great Chola kings and queens built wonderful temples. About 18 km. from Tiruvarur in Tanjore district, is situated the famous Murugan (Subramanyan) temple in the small town called ENKAN. There is a moving story about the sculptor who has given us this gem of a sculpture.

The sculptor was commissioned to make a rare image of Muruga for the temple in a town called 'Sikkal'. Being a great devotee, he had a vision of Muruga and chiselled an image in accordance with his vision. Struck by the unique beauty of the image, the people of the town gave him a lot of money but demanded a sacrifice from him. Can you imagine what it was? It was the right thumb of the sculptor! Why? So that the sculptor could not make another Muruga image of that grandeur!

The sculptor moved to another town called 'Ettukudi'. The people there requested him to make a Muruga image for the temple they were building. With full faith in his Lord, the sculptor accepted the offer. He made a wonderful image of Muruga, in the record time of one month. The Lord was installed in the temple and the sculptor was rewarded with bags of gold. But alas! Their selfishness and pride reached the point of cruelty because they saw to it that the sculptor was blinded.

The sculptor was unshaken by his great loss. Filled with love for Muruga, he wandered aimlessly. He came to a small town where he was welcomed by a group of people who were directed by Muruga to meet him and request him to make an image of the Lord. Blind and devoid of his right thumb, still he rejoiced in the glory of his Lord and started on his work. He was given a servant maid to assist him.

The sculptor saw the Lord in his inner eye, and started on his assignment. Unlike the previous two images, he started from the base and worked on. The image was 'Shanmuga' (the six-faced one) on his 'Vahana' (vehicle), the peacock. The extraordinary feature of the image is that it is balanced on the legs of the peacock. The slender legs of the peacock form the base of the image. There are two faces on either side of the central face. Behind are the three other faces. So the six-faced Lord, with twelve hands, each carrying a weapon, was nearly completed. The last thing that the sculptor has to do is significantly described as 'opening the eyes'. That means,

the sculptor gives the final touch that will impart the glow to the eyes.

At that stage, the sculptor poured out his heart in agony. "How can one, without sight, give Thee sight? I will not touch the chisel any more," he cried and threw away the chisel. It struck the finger of the maid who was assisting him. The blood that gushed from her wound, fell on the eyes of the sculptor. Ah! What a wonder! The sculptor regained his vision and saw the Muruga he had made. Shedding tears of joy, he exclaimed, "Lord, Giver of 'EN-KAN' (my eyes), how shall I praise Thee?" Since then the town itself got the name of ENKAN.

The Utsava idol (the bronze image taken out during festivals) is a replica of this Muruga, both in size and minute decorative details. When I was given the opportunity of going round this Utsava Lord, I saw the claws of the peacock, the rings on the fingers of Muruga, the minute details of the weapons etc. I must tell you that the bow and the arrow held in the top left and right hands respectively, are so realistic, that one feels that the arrow would be pulled out any moment. Another remarkable feature is that the earrings can be inserted and taken out of each of the ears, as the holes are so deftly made.

The charming smile and grace of the Lord is breath-taking. With His consorts, Devi Valli on his right side and Devi Deivanai on the left side, Muruga showers His Grace on all the devotees.

This temple had become famous by the 7th century A.D. The great Tamil saint Thirunavukkarasu sang the glory of the Lord in the same century.

THE MASTERPIECE

By R. Prabha

Once upon a time in a small house lived two dear friends, Sudha and Shobha. Sudha earned her living by singing and Shobha by painting. As ill luck would have it, once Shobha fell ill and inspite of the great care and love showered on her could not recover. The doctor told Sudha that there was very little hope for Shobha.

Shobha was now bedridden. She used to see, through the window, an old creeper which had grown on the wall. Each time a leaf fell, she counted and said to Sudha that she would live only till that day when the last leaf fell.

Below their house lived an old painter called Vivek who always boasted that his masterpiece would be appreciated all over the world.

Winter set in. The cold nights made most of the leaves fall off. Only two more were left. Shobha said that with their falling, she would leave the world. But the next morning she woke to find a dried leaf still fluttering. Four days passed by. She got inspiration from that leaf and lived on.

When she was well again, she went to meet Vivek. But she saw Vivek dead on his bed. Near him was a colour box full of green and yellow colour.

She was shocked. She went to the wall and saw that the leaf was not real but painted. To make Shobha live, Vivek had worked all night and had later succumbed to the cold. The leaf was Vivek's masterpiece.

Think !

The spirit of dedication gives to any individual a handle to lift himself in his own life.

—Swami Chinmayananda

Lifting an object with a handle is easier than lifting one without it. Similarly, a person who is earnestly and fully devoted to his goal, will find it easier to "lift himself up" in life than one who lacks this spirit of dedication. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Bal Vihar. The last date for sending in entries is October 15th, so send your entry soon.

The Winner!

The winner of the thought for the month of June is M. R. Arun Iyengar of Durgapur (14 years). Congratulations, Arun! We have sent you "Tell me a story — Part I and II" as a prize. Hope you enjoy reading them!

Enthusiasm is the very fuel in all great men

By M. R. Arun Iyengar

The word 'Enthusiasm' comes from 'Entheos'—'The God within'—and means to be inspired or possessed by God. It is the open secret that gives joy and purpose to our lives, if only we do not despise it or slacken in our efforts. As Swamiji says, "the really great have both the enthusiasm to work, the good sense to wait and the courage to pursue." Enthusiasm is at the same time devotion, passion and zeal for an aim in life.

Let us take the example of Shivaji. Prithviraj Chauhan's defeat and death due to Jaichand's treachery had set in the foreign rule at Delhi. It was at its height at the time of Aurangzeb. Foreign rule had spread to South India also. Shivaji's father

When we enjoy our work, we give little thought to leisure—
Jolly & Maker
Maker Bhavan No. 2, New Marine Lines, Bombay–400 020.

Shahji was himself working under the Sultans but Shivaji's mother Jijabai, a pious and patriotic lady had enormous influence over him and moulded his future. She told him of the stories of the greatness of our motherland and her great sons. Shivaji would not bow his head low to the Sultan even if his father did. He was inspired by his mother, his teacher Dadaji Kon-deo, and by Guru Ramdas. Helped by a band of devoted and loyal friends and with the blessings of Goddess Bhavani, he was fired with the enthusiasm to fight to serve his motherland. He faced many difficulties. He was deceived and imprisoned at Agra. But finally he won fort by fort, and established democracy. If only his successors were equally fired with similar enthusiasm, the history of our country would have been different.

In modern times and in a different land, we find the example of Roald Amundsen (1872–1928). As a little boy, Amundsen was inspired by tales of explorers, so he determined to be one of them. He developed a strong body and iron will by devoting himself to skiing, long distance running and walking. In winter he slept with windows open in one of the coldest countries of Norway.

His ambition was to conquer the North Pole. He prepared himself for it. He planned to drift across the North Pole in 1909, but when the American explorer Admiral Peary anticipated him, he turned his course South to the Antartic Ocean. Then he raced against time to beat the English explorer Capt. Scott, to reach the South Pole. He made a base at the Bay of Whales. Whence, with dog-teams, and encountering many difficulties, he discovered the South Pole, on December 14th, 1911, a month ahead of Capt. Scott.

These examples clearly show us how enthusiasm leads to great achievements. Many such examples can be found in all countries. Quoting Swamiji again, if we can set our goals, and work with enthusiasm "right results will follow right efforts everywhere in life."

The Crow and the Pitcher

Retold by I. H. C. Gab from Aesop's fables)

A crow was about to die of thirst. He flew to a pitcher kept at some distance. He found some water in it indeed, but near the bottom. He was unable to reach it with all his stooping. He could not overturn the pitcher either, for it was heavy.

At last, he found some small stones lying near the place. He dropped them one by one into the pitcher. It raised the water up and thus he satisfied his thirst.

The seed dies so that the flower may appear—
Quality Labs
Bombay–Bangalore.

Children venture into the Himalayas

By Maya C. Malani

For the first time in India and probably the world, childern in the age group of 11–14 years went on a mountain-climbing expedition. The adventurous children were eleven boy scouts from the Bombay Scottish School (Mahim), who set out in the middle of May to conquer the Friendship peak (17,353') in the Western Himalayas.

The idea of taking children on such an expedition occurred to Mr. Mani and Mr. Shankaran, the founder members of the Explorers and Adventurers Club. As this is the International Year of the Child, they reccived support from all quarters. The concept of "character building through adventure" appealed to the school principal and the parents. Mr. L. Gamaliel, the Principal, said "How could I object in the face of so much enthusiasm and common sense?"

The next step was to get the permission of the Indian Mountaineering Foundation. Normally the IMF would not have sanctioned such an expedition where there were only two trained peopled in a group of 15. The scouts were accompanied by two doctors from the K. E. M. Hospital (Parel) and Mr.P.B. Prabhu, the scout master, who was the Camp Commandant. But thanks to the help extended by Commander Joginder Singh, a member of the IMF, Brigadier Gyan Singh, Director of the National Himalayan Trekking programme and Captain M. S. Kohli, leader of the successful Everest expedition in 1956, they obtained the permission and funds from the IMF and the Government of Maharshtra (Rs. 5000 each). The children contributed Rs. 500 each. The balance was given by Air India, Hindustan Lever and various pharmaceutical companies in kind (food, medicines etc.)

The troop left Bombay on the 13th of May. There were five students from the seventh standard –Swapneel, Sanjay, Kiron, Gautam and Ninad. Tiny eleven–year–old Kiron, born on September 27, 1967 was the youngest member of the team. The oldest, lively 14–year-old James and Lalit were form the ninth standard. The eighth standard students were Parvez, Anil, Histasp and George. There were two doctors, Dr. M. G. Koppikar(a surgeon) and Dr. S. V. Joshi (a general physician).

Each person carried a haversack with his clothes, woollens and other necessities. The load per child varied from 7-10 kgs. The total load was 850-900 kgs. including the rations and equipment, for which 36 porters were hired at Manali. The equipment which they hired from mountaineering clubs in Bombay, Delhi and Manali, consisted of airmattresses, sleeping bags,

ice axes (for gripping the ice), windproof jackets and climbing boots.

The journey was completed in three stages—Bombay– Delhi by train, Delhi–Manali by bus with four days' stopover for acclimatisation; and Manali–Palchand (a distance of eight kms) by truck.

IT WAS FUN

The party sighted snow at Solang Nulla, very close to Palchand. Many of them saw snow for the first time. "We were very excited," they said. They had snowball fights and made a snowman at Bhakra Thatch, which they reached after two days' trek.

In Dhundi, they met a Himalayan dog which became their mascot. "It was a huge dog with big paws and thick fur", according to James. The dog was friendly and followed them to the base camp.

The next morning, they reached Bkahra Thach (11,000′), where they set up camp. The leader of the porters was Ringzing (who is the President of Manali Climbers' Association) but it was 65-year old Bada Tashi who kept them going for the rest of the trip. They used to roar with laughter at his jokes, his comic dances and whistles.

The porters set up eight tents for them to sleep in and a tarpaulin 'sheltered' the kitchen. The cook Lankpa dished out the same menu every day: omelette, chappattis and pickle for breakfast; potato and carrot bhaji with rice and chappattis for lunch.

To be Continued.

Tough Boys

The eleven boy scouts who made an unsuccessful attempt to climb Friendship peak (17,353′) in the Western Himalayas, were not formally trained in mountaineering. However it was the bad weather rather than lack of training which defeated them.

The boys have been on difficult monsoon hikes in the Western Ghats, walking 15 miles a day with hardly any rest through dense forests and over steep inclines. On a hike to Bhimashanker, they returned by the ladder route which is so steep that anyone who slips, can fall 2000′ to his death. The five-day rock climbing course they took at Kanheri caves in April 1978, has also made them tough. Nevertheless, the experience of Parvez and Ninad who went on the expedition without learning rock-climbing, proves that they are natural mountaineers. All the boy scouts have attended two lectures on first aid. Generally they have been active, doing P. T., cycling, jogging and taking part in games. They have been fit and confident to participate in this adventure.

No wonder Mr. P. B. Prabhu, the scout master of Bombay Scottish School, was not worried about shouldering the responsibility of eleven boisterous students on such an expedition. "They have the basic discipline," he said.

Thanks to the attempt of these brave boy scouts, the field of mountaineering; so far restricted to adults, has been opened up to children.

Onam
Kerala's Popular Festival

By |Br. Yoga Chaitanya

Onam, Kerala's popular festival, is celebrated with enthusiasm every year. The people of Kerala decorate the courtyards of houses with flowers and make an elaborate traditional lunch. In recent times, boat-racing has also become a part of Thiruvonam celebrations. Brahmachari Yoga Chaitanya relates the story, explaining why Onam is celebrated.

Mahabali was a great King. He ruled the kingdom beautifully. The people were happy and praised the king. He was honoured by all for he was generous. He used to give anything to the needy.

Mahabali was a devotee of Lord Vishnu. He used to devote most of his time to the traditional worship of the Lord, who blessed him. It is the duty of the Lord to protect his devotees from any danger. Sri Bhagavan says in Geeta "Na me bhaktah pranasyathi," meaning, "my devotee whoever he is, will never perish."

Mahabali became very proud. Lord Vishnu wanted to save him from his own ego.

One day, Lord Vishnu himself appeared in the form of a dwarf (vamana) before King Mahabali. The king did the "ATHITHI PUJA" in the traditional style. According to custom, the host has to give a dakshina (donation) at the end.

I expect to pass through life but once. If therefore, there is any good thing I can do to any fellow being, let me do it now —

The Jai Hind Oil Mills Co.

387, Narsi Natha Street, Bombay–400 009.

The king said, "please ask me whatever you like. I am ready to give you anything. I am the king and I have got everything at my disposal."

The owner of the entire universe replied, "Oh blessed king, kindly grant me three feet of land measured by my own foot. I neet nothing else."

The king was amused at this silly request. He offered his wonderful palaces and heavenly enjoyments. But the poor dwarf rejected all these things and asked for three feet of land. The king granted the wish of the boy.

Immiediately, the dwarf's figure expanded and his single foot covered the entire earth. The king and the courtiers got frightened! With his second foot, he covered the entire heavens. The whole of the universe was measured with the two steps and there was no space left for the third step. The dwarf said, "Oh Lord, please tell me, where shall I put my third step?" The king bowed down humbly and said "Oh Lord, please place your foot on my head." As soon as he put his foot on the king's forehead, the king disappeared into the Patala Loka (the nether world).

It is believed that onne every year, King Mahabali visits his beloved subjects on Onam day. The people of Kerala wait eagerly for the king and make preparations for his visit. This is why Onam is celebrated with such grandeur.

Onam reminds us to surrender our ego to the Lord. The ego is our worst enemy. When we give it up, all our miseries come to an end. Lord Vishnu appeared on earth to teach us this great lesson. This manifestation in the form of a dwarf is known as Vamanavatar.

RIDDLES

1. Which is the pet which makes the loudest noise?
2. Which is the thing which we use today and make tomorrow?
3. I can run and whistle but neithere talk nor walk. Who am I?
4. What has a trunk yet no place to go?

Answers on page 23

MY LOVELY MOTHER

By Mitali Sethi (11 *years*)

My Mother is sweet
and also very neat.
She is short
But I love her a lot.
Every night she gives me a kiss
which I know she will never mtss.

It is the inner insufficiency while facing a fact that creates a problem

With Best Compliments From

Lekha, Seema and Chitra

(Cannanore Bal Vihar members)

BHARAT DARSHAN

SANKARA-NARAYANAR KOIL

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

From Tirunelveli if we go 50 km. northwards, we come to a unique temple whose name has been given to the place also. It is called Sankara-Narayanar Koil (Siva-Vishnu temple). In this place, God revealed Himself in the combined form of Sankara-Narayana.

We learn of instances of very staunch devotees of Siva who will not tolerate the presence of Vishnu. Equally bigoted have been some devotees of Vishnu who could not bear the sight of Siva! Seeing this state of affairs, one day, Parvati Devi approached Siva and said, "Lord, I find that the Saivites and Vaishnavites are quarrelling about the superiority of their own deity and decrying the other deity. Even the Naga Kings—Sanga and Padma—are wrangling about this. Please tell me whether Thou art one and the same or .....". Lord Siva smiled at Parvati's doubt and thought that the time had come to clear it.

Everyone has to pay a price for discovering Truth. Accordingly the Lord said, "Parvati, you go to the Punnai (a kind of tree) forest, at the foot of the Agastya hill and do tapas (penance). Your doubt will be cleared."

With single-minded devotion, Devi undertook tapas, standing on one leg, with uplifted hands. On the fullmoon day of Adi (July–August), the Lord gave Darshan as Sankara-Narayana. This great event is celebrated as the finale of the temple festival that goes on for 10 days in July–August. Thousands of devotees gather that evening to witness this unique event. In the main street, adjoining the temple, the Lord is carried from one direction, and Devi from the opposite direction. When they are face to face, the muslin veil that hides the Lord is drawn aside and camphor light is offered. Along with the Devi, thousands of devotees also have Darshan of Sankara-Narayana, amidstshouts of jubilation.

Now, let us go into the temple through the Raja Gopuram (great tower) which is 125 ft. high and has nine tiers. There are three shrines—one for Siva, one for Devi, and in between the two shrines, is that of Sankara–Narayana. The magnificence and beauty of the concept of Lord Sankara and Narayana is breath-taking. When the sandal-paste is applied to the deity, we can clearly see the details of Vishnu on the left side and of Siva on the right. Note the conch, the pearl-necklace, the mark of Srivatsa and the brilliant ear-ring on the left. On the right, see the trident or axe, the garland of skulls, and the serpent coil of the ear-ring and the Ganga.

The 'Utsava' idol of this combined form is equally beautiful and attractive. Only on the 'Adi-tapas' festival day, this Sankara-Narayana

comes out and gives Darshan. We are told that on this festival day, the Lord earns enough for the year! The devotes make generous offerings both in cash and kind. Farmers bring their fruits, paddy, cotton, chillies, vegetables etc.

There is an interesting story about the origin of this temple. When the Punnai forest was being cleared, the forest guard was taken aback by a very strange sight. There was a Sivalinga in an ant-hill guarded by a huge cobra. He rushed to the chieftain of the region, Ugra Pandian and reported the matter. The chieftain was a great devotee of Siva and he often used to go to Mad rai for worship. Learning of the strange phenomenon, he immediately made arrangements for building a temple at that site. The ant-hill was preserved and even to-day we can see it in the temple. The sacred earth from this ant-hill is given as 'prasad' and devotees believe that it cures all diseases.

Gomati Ambal is the name of the Goddess of the temple, who had obtained the rare Darshan of Sankara-Narayana. Gomati means the cow-like one. Just as a cow attracts its own calf even in the midst of hundreds of cows, Gomati Ambal attracts devotees and showers Her grace on them. She is the healer of all diseases, particularly the severe forms of hysterical diseases. Devotees flock to her with their offerings and pray for Her gracious gifts of health and happiness.

There are a number of inscriptions from which we learn that the temple was built in the 10th century and the Rajagopuram in the 11th century. There is a big tank called 'Naga Sunai' (Naga tank) supposed to have been excavated by Sanka and Padma, the Naga kings, as a grateful offering for the rare Darshan they had got.

Dusty—The Little Demon

By Shalu

Guru and Geeta were very dirty children. Every morning and evening, their mother would say, "Childıen, go and brush your teeth." But they never did. Oh no, they were more interested in playing with their toys. Their mother would often say in despair, "When will they ever learn?"

Unknown to the children, there lived in their garden, a little demon. He was very small — about a quarter of the size of your little finger. He lived in dirt and was always covered from head to toe with dust and mud. Oh, he was a real sight to see! He had yellow teeth which were slowly turning black because he never took care of them. This little demon was called Dusty by all his friends in the garden. They kept away from him because he smelled so bad.

One day, Dusty was playing in the corner of Guru and Geeta's room. At the corner of the window

sill was a lot of black, sticky dirt and Dusty played and rolled in it with glee. Suddenly, he heard the mother telling the children to brush their teeth. The children came up but did not go to the wash basin Instead, they sat down and began to build a house out of clay. Then they fashioned the figure of a man and made him stand near the door. "Oh, Guru, he does look so much like old Uncle Ram!" said Geeta. And they both dissolved into laughter. You see, their old Uncle Ram had a big beaky nose and Guru's clever hands had also shaped one and stuck it on the face of the figure.

On hearing their laughter, Dusty stopped his rolling and looked at them His face lit up with joy and anticipation. For guess what he saw! Two sets of perfectly yellow teeth with brown stains in the middle. There were also black crevices at the back, where cavities were slowly setting in. A new place to play in. Dusty was overjoyed! He could hardly wait for the children to go to sleep.

Soon enough, they became tired and started yawning. Slowly, they climbed into their beds and were soon drifting into dreamland.

Dusty slid down from the window sill and crept towards their bed. Being as agile as a monkey, he quickly climbed up on Guru's bed and jumped straight on to his lips. Slowly, he wriggled inside and began to explore.

In the middle of the night, Guru woke up with a terrible pain in his cheek. Oh, how it throbbed and throbbed. It was all the work of Dusty. You see, he was dancing all around and Guru's nerves, which were already exposed due to his neglect, became sore. Once, Dusty even pulled at one or two as though they were strings. No wonder, poor Guru was in such pain. He sat up and Dusty panicked. Quickly he slid out and went towards Geeta's bed.

Soon Geeta was also awake. She felt as though her whole face was swollen. Dusty was having a rollicking time. He jumped, he danced, he clapped, he rolled. Once, he stood on an exposed nerve and Geeta almost screamed. For, he wore heavy pointed shoes. And that can be very, very, painful.

Both the children began to cry. Dusty chuckled with glee. He was not only a dirty demon, but also a spiteful one. He quickly climbed onto the window sill and watched with interest.

Their mother, hearing their cries, quickly came running in. "What's the matter, children?" she asked, switching on the light. She saw them holding their hands against their swollen cheeks. "Do you have a toothache?" Though she scolded them, she felt very sad. For no mother likes to see her children in pain.

All night, she sat and soothed them. She gave them a hot water bag each, but nothing seemed to help. After what seemed like hours, it was morning. Quickly, the children dressed up and were taken to the dentist.

Dr. Ali was a big jolly man with a white shining smile and merry brown eyes. He saw the miserable faces of the children, and said, "Oh, oh, what do we have here? Two little sour pusses!" The children tried to smile, but could not. He made them sit on his high chair and began to examine their teeth. "My, my, what dirty teeth! So Dusty has been upto his tricks again, is it?" You see, Dr. Ali knew all about Dusty. Once Dusty had gone to sleep inside one child's mouth and the dentist had found him there. How he had spanked and spanked him! Dusty had howled and begged for mercy. Dr. Ali told Geeta and Guru all about Dusty. "So you see," he ended sternly. "Always brush your teeth well, once in the morning and once at night. Otherwise, Dusty will trouble you again."

He sprayed their mouths with some medicine and instantly the pain stopped.

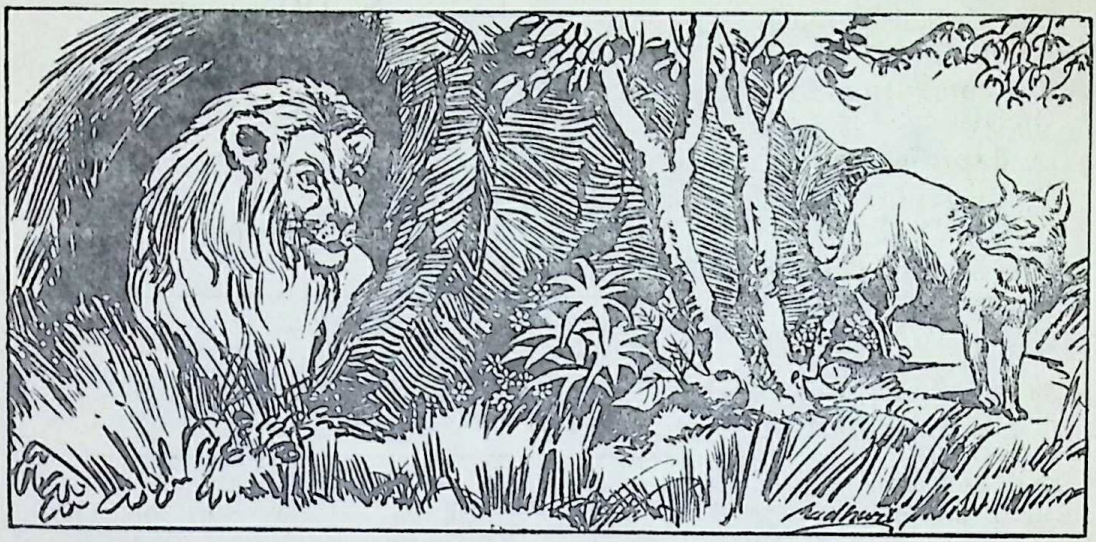
Feeling very subdued and relieved, the children went home. And do you know the first thing they did on reaching their rooms? They ran towards the wash-basin and brushed their teeth! It really felt good to have white sparkling teeth!

Now, Geeta and Guru have become the cleanest children in the neighbourhood. The only person who is sad is Dusty. He cannot play on their window sill anymore. You see, every day they dust their entire room. I am sure you do yours too. But if you ever see a little dirt anywhere, be sure to look closely. You just may see the little demon rolling in it!

The Cave That Talked

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala



There was once a lion named Rough-Claw. He lived in a big forest. One day he had nothing to eat. He wandered about in search of food. From morning to night he roamed but did not find anything.

At sunset he came to a great mountain cave. He stood in front of the cave's entrance and thought, "Surely some animal will come into the cave at night. I'll hide inside it and wait."

Very soon, the owner of the cave, a jackal named, Curd-Face, came to the cave mouth. He sensed some danger. So he started to sing, "Cave ahoy, Cave ahoy."

Then after waiting for some time in the same light tone he sang, "Hello, Hello cave, have you forgotten our agreement, that I am to speak to you when I come every night? And that you have to invite me to spend the night here? Since you won't speak to me tonight, I shall go to some other cave. Bye cave, Bye Bye!"

On hearing this, Rough-Claw said to himself, "I see this cave always calls out a greeting, when Curd-Face returns in the night. Perhaps, the cave is frightened since I am here and doesn't say a word tonight."

Being vain, it was natural for the lion to think that his presence was enough to scare everyone.

"I'll myself call out a greeting. Curd-Face will then come into

the cave and I'll eat him up."

With these happy thoughts, he called out a greeting. But the cave so magnified the roar that its echoes vibrated inside the cave and the surrounding area, terrifying all the forest creatures.

The jackal scooted, singing to himself:

Joy comes from knowing what to dread,
And sorrow strikes the blockhead;
A long life through the woods I've walked,
But never heard a cave that talked.

Do you know these "NATIONS"?

Given below are a few blanks ending with "nation", Try to fill them using the clues given in brackets.

1. .....NATION (A test)
2. .....NATION (A gift)
3. .....NATION (Act of adding)
4. .....NATION (Power of thinking).
5. .....NATION (Making a thing clear)

By H. N. Shyla (12 *years*)

Answers on Page 23

RAMAYANA

SRI RAMA'S CHILDHOOD AND EDUCATION (Contd.)

By Anantha Narayanan

All the studies of the princes neared completion and Dasaratha was fully satisfied that they were fit to take up responsibility. He naturally thought about their next Samskara—marriage—choosing the right life partners for them!

Being a Dharmic King, he sought the advice of his Guru, Counsellers and ralations in the choice of the daughters-in-law, who would be the members of the noble Ikshvaku family. As they were discussing this auspicious and important question in the midst of the learned assembly in the palace, the Great Sage (Brahmarishi) Viswamitra, who was possessed of unique glory, arrived at the palace in a great hurry!

Seeking audience with the King, he addressed the gatekeepers thus : "Inform the King that Sage Vishwamitra, belonging to the line of Kusa? (कौशिक), the son of Gadh[1] has arrived." When they heard this, the guards could hardly believe their eyes that the famous and most powerful sage had come all the way to see the King! Trembling with fear and confusion, they rushed inside and reported the matter to the King.

The entire palace was roused with excitement. King Dasaratha could not believe his ears! Overjoyed to hear about the unexpected arrival of this great but rare visitor (विशिष्ट अतिथि), the King rushed forward with devotion, along with his Guru and family, to receive the Sage. The cause for the joy and excitement was only natural to those who knew the great history of this Mighty Sage of austere vows and burning radiance!

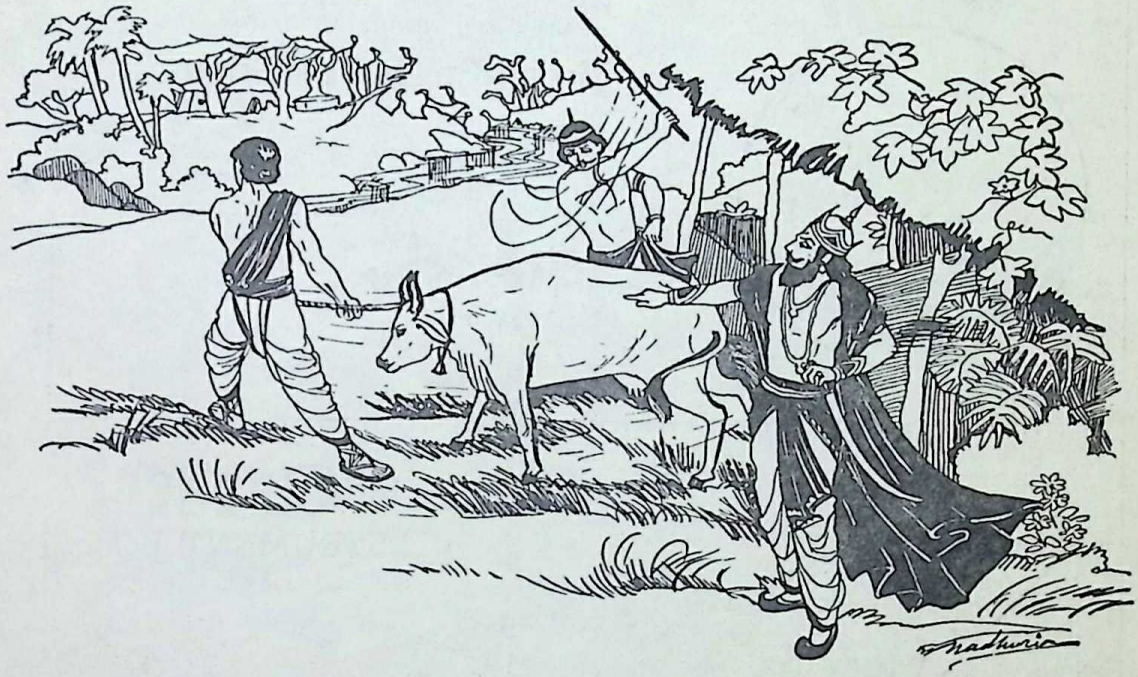
SAGE VISWAMITRA

Sage Viswamitra was a great king who became, through a process of trial and error, a Brahmarishi—one of the greatest Rishis like Sage Vasishta. This achievement was only possible by severe tapas, test and struggle for thousands of years!

There is a Sanskrit saying "बलवान् इन्द्रियग्रामो विद्वांसमपि कर्षति ।" which means "The sense organs are very powerful and are capable of pulling down even the learned and the great!"

The life of Sage Viswamitra is an illustration of this wise saying. As he was highly impulsive, he fell a victim to greed (लोभ) anger (क्रोध) and desire (काम) in his long struggle. Failures, however, are stepping stones to success. With great perseverance and by terrible tapas, he attained mastery over his mind and attained Sainthood! He is the Rishi of the powerful Gayatri Mantra!

We shall have a brief peep into his life.



God is not an "object" to be found outside. Discover HIM within—

Indira Construction Pvt. Ltd.

6 Oak Lane, Fort, Bombay 400 001.

As a king, one day Viswamitra with his army happened to come to the humble ashram of Sage Vasishta — the Brahmarishi. He was received with honour and lavishly treated by the sage. Viswa mitra was surprised and curious to konw the secret source of such unexpected plenty in such an austere ashram!

To Viswamitra's question, Sage Vasishta honestly replied that though his wants were few, his divine cow "Sabala" fulfilled all his requirements, whenever necessary. Happy to hear about this source of power and wealth, King Viswamitra's greed made him ask for the cow, as she would be of greater use to him and his army than in the ashram!

Sage Vasishta's polite refusal made him angry and he attempted to forcibly take the cow with the help of his army. At the command of the divine sage, the divine and powerful cow brought out soldiers who utterly defeated the king's army! Viswamitra's sons, who attacked the sage, were also burnt down!

Burning with shame and anger, Viswamitra went to the Himlayas to do tapas on Lord Shiva for obtaining power to defeat Sage Vasishta. After years of tapas, Lond Shiva who was pleased, appeared before him and, as per Viswamitra's request, blessed him with the mastery of all powerful weapons.

CRICKET

INDIA'S CHANCES AGAINST THE AUSSIES

Hello Sportslovers!

It is an indication of India's standing in current Test Cricket that an Australian side, despite having omitted most of its best players, can still tour India with confidence. Five years ago, one could have perdicted a walk-over for India. Now only the most optimistic India will do so.

Though India would start as slim favourites for the home series against Australia, its chances of winning the series would depend on whether our spinners Venkatreghavan, Bedi and Chandrasekhar recapture the form and fitness they once had.

The Captains of both sides have not yet been named, as I write these lines. Such is the speed of Test Cricket today, that cricketers, journalists and the cricket-loving public prepare for the next series even before a current series is half-way over. Kim Hughes, who recently led Australia to a spectacular victory against Pakistan and then not so successfully in the World Cup, appears to be the most likely to lead the visitors. Both Venkatraghavan and Gavaskar apparently have equal chances of captaining. India.

The more happiness you give to others, the more it comes back to you—
Shri Govindabhai K. Raja
63, Napean Sea Road, "Suvas Aprtments," 4th Floor, Bombay–400 006.

The Mind–Neither good nor bad

By Anoop Kumar Bhattacharya, Std. VII A
Seth Anandaram Jaipuria School, Kanpur (U. P.)

On 26th March 1979, Swami Chinmayananda came to our school to delivered speech.

Swami Chinmayananda is from Kerala. When he was young, he came in contact with some learned people, got influenced and was thus converted.

Swamiji said that when he was young, many scholars and learned people delivered speeches in his school. But they spoke on such complicated topics that he could not make head or tail of it. He listened to the speeches just for the sake of discipline of the school. So keeping these instances in mind, Swamiji spoke on a very simple topic which was, "How to become good".

Everyone likes to be good and all elders tell their youngsters to be good. But, how to become good?

Swamiji also experienced this, so one day he asked his father, "Father, you always tell me to be good. But how to become good?"

His father looked at him and said "Go back to your room and be good!"

So the next day, Swamiji asked his teacher about it. But his teacher looked at him sternly and said, "Sit down and be good!"

Great saints studied this and developed a great mantra. Our actions are good when our minds are good; and our minds are good when our thoughts are good and when our actions are good we are good and vice versa.

Our mind is neither good nor bad, it is the thoughts which make it good or bad. Thus a saint can also become a sinner and a sinner a saint.

So the mind can be compared to a pot. When there is milk in it, it is known as a milk pot and when there is ink in it, it is known as an ink pot etc.

Thus we can say—"The goodness or badness of the mind depends on the thoughts".

When you think of something, its qualities come to you for example if one thinks of a sweet, one's mouth starts watering. So if from time to time, one thinks of God, His (God's) qualities will come to him.

One can also stop a fight in this manner. Supposing two people are fighting and all the men around them utter God's name, the people in the fight will become calm and the fight will stop.

Most people who are great are great because of their minds.

Prayer helps us to adjust our minds, so if we want our minds to be good we should pray.

Swamiji concluded his speech saying that we need great people in this country, so people should try to beautify their minds by good thoughts.

Think !

Worry is a humble confession of our own lack of self-confidence.

—Swami Chinmayananda

Why do we worry? Only because we are not sure that we can achieve our goals. When we worry, we unconsciously admit that we lack faith in our own ability.

This is the thought for the month. Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Bal Vihar. The last date for sending in entries is November 15th, so send in your entry soon.

The Winner !

The Winner of the thought for the month of July is N. Anant Rao of Puri-2 (12 years). Congratulations Anant for winning this prize the second time! We are sending you "Tell me a Story"—Part I and II as a prize.

Give up evil and be good

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, well known as Bapuji, started smoking when he was twelve years old. He smoked the cigarette ends left by his uncle. Gradually, the habit of smoking developed and he started stealing the money hidden by his maid servant. He discontinue l stealing money wnen this was detected by his maid servant. To continue the habit of smoking, he used to go to a neaby forest, pick up Datura leaves and make cigarettes out of them. These were Indian cigarettes (bidis). When his parents came to know about his activities, they scolded him. He could not tolerate the abuse of his parents and one evening he went to the dilapidated temple in the

Genius is the infinite capacity to take pains—
Polyplastics Corporation
105-106, A-Z Industrial Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Bombay-400 013.

forest and took an oath that he would never smoke in his life and he kept this promise throughout his life. The same boy became a great man, renowned as Mahatma Gandhi. He is ever remembered for his good habits and deeds.

But in the case of most people, they make mistakes in their early life but cannot rectify them. Hence they are unable to become people of good character. We generally make promises but we do not keep them. But in the case of Mahatma Gandhi, since he kept his promise, he became a great man. So we too should try not only to give up evil habits but also to be good.

By N. Anant Rao (12 years)

Fill in the Squares

By Chitra Rao

1. Fill in the squares so that you have three letter words in such a way that the first column horizontally spells a tall animal with a long slender neck. [Giraffe – gun, imp, rat, ant, fat, fun and eat.]

2. Fill in the squares in such a way that you form three letter words and the middle line spells out the name of a dog, which is usually used by the police.
[Alsatian.]

3. Fill in the right letters in the squares so that each vertical column spells a word and the centre line forms the name of a vegetable.
[Onion.]

Answers on page 18

1.

		N
		P
		T
		T
		T
		N
		T

2.

C	O	U	B	A	P	C	O
T	D	E	T	E	N	T	E

3.

D	A	P	T	O
G	T	N	E	E

A wise man is one who knows where and when to stop—

Vijay Corporation
65, Ideal Industrial Estate, Tulsipipe Road, Lower Parel, Bombay-400 013.

Deepavali

A Row of Lights

By Keshavan Unni Nair

There is one day in the year which all the children of our country wait for very eagerly. Even the elders seem to enjoy themselves on this day of holy happiness. Yes, it is none other than our National Festival—Deepavali. Do you know why we celebrate it?

Deepavali is our national festival. It is celebrated with great pomp and glory. On this day, all the people, be they Hindus, Muslims or Christians, rich or poor, forget their differences and enjoy themselves. Especially in the Northern parts of India, Deepavali is con-

Moral teachings have no vital force unless they are associated with a divinely inspired personality—

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sidered the beginning of the New Year of the Hindu Calendar, and therefore celebrated more grandly. People spend their money to buy new clothes, tasty sweets and colourful crackers to amuse themselves. Petty quarrels are forgotten as they embrace each other in joy.

Deepavali is known as the Festival of lights. And rightly too, since Deepavali is made up of two words : Deepa, which means 'Light' or 'Lamp' and 'vali' meaning 'row' or 'line'. So it is a Row or Line of Lamps or Lights. This is true since every house however poor lights at least a few mud lamps and keeps them in a glowing row. How beautiful the lamps look in the darkness of the moonless night! Of course there is a deep truth hidden in these lamps too. They stand for the light of knowledge which removes the darkness of ignorance and poverty. Don't you think that it could also mean the fire of knowledge in which we should burn out our ignorance and evil habits? Why, it could also be the fire of prosperity in which we should burn up our poverty!

Deepavali is a festival, during which the trading community invokes the blessings of Lakshmi Devi, the Goddess of Wealth. The 'Vaishyas' or merchants perform puja, offering whatever they have to the Goddess while asking for prosperity in the coming year. They therefore open their account books for the oncoming year after receiving the blessings of the Goddess. There is a Puranic story that on this auspicious day, Lakshmi appeared as a result of the Devas churning the oceans, in order to invoke the blessings of Lord Vishnu in their fight against the Asuras. The wife of Lord Vishnu was pleased by their devotion and begged her Lord to help them out.

The merriment during Deepavali or Diwali as it is called now for convenience, has given rise to another story. It is said that the celebration was started by the people of Ayodhya on Sri Rama's triumphant return to the throne after fourteen years in the forest. Naturally the people were as happy as we would be if Sri Rama were to return to rule us!

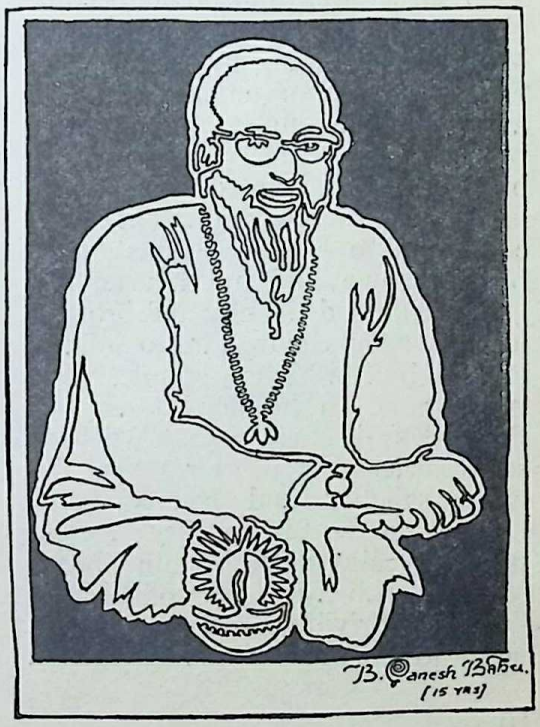
Most of the tales about this joyous occasion are built around the great Lord Krishna. The most popular among them, concerns a demon called Narakasura, which means the "Demon of Hell". This asura was evil and used to trouble all the great Rishis, the holy men doing tapas (penance). As they performed their yagnas, this demon used to kill some innocent helpless animal and pour its blood into the offerings. This upset their prayer, made it unholy and forced them to start again. The harassed Rishis went to Lord Vishnu who heard all their complaints and decided to do something about it. He appeared in his favourite and popular avatara, Bhagwan Sri Krishna. After a long battle in which Krishna toyed with th unfortunate demon, the evil fellow realised the greatness of his divine opponent. As he lay maimed and about to die, he begged the Lord's pardon. He was so repentant that

the Lord took pity on him and granted him a boon and Narakasura's demand was a very reasonable one. He bowed humbly in front of Krishna and said, "I want everyone born in this world to know what an evil man I was. I want them to celebrate on this auspicious day, when such an evil soul was destroyed. May this day be celebrated by everyone, rich or poor." And so has it been, ever since. Another version is that this demon used to harass all the young girls and lock them up in a castle with the idea of marrying them. The troubled parents of these girls came to Sri Krishna, who quickly went and destroyed the demon. The girls were so happy to be released that they all insisted on being married to the Lord himself! Don't you think this story is symbolic? The asura is our mind, in which the 16,008 girls are the thoughts. Shouldn't we seek the Lord's help to free us of the bondages of this world and link our thoughts to the Lord? No wonder, Sri Krishna had 16,008 wives! Don't we all have so many thoughts in our mind every minute? We must dedicate them to the Lord!

No wonder then, that we all celebrate Deepavali on such a grand scale. So much importance is attached to this day, since in all the stories, there is an element of the Good winning over the Evil.

We must reach out to less fortunate friends and share all that we have with them. Everyone likes to burst crackers, but in our country, not many children can afford them. We must all decide to celebrate Diwali in a different style this year. First of all, an early morning bath, and a visit to a nearby temple, however small it may be. On one of the days, since Diwali is celebrated over four days, every sister does puja to her brother, to seek his protection. This is called "Bhai Beej".

In the International Year of the Child, let us resolve to celebrate Diwali hereafter in a novel way. We must give away the clothes which we do not use anymore to poor children, while entertaining them with all the sweets we make in the house, and allowing them to enjoy our crackers. It will make us very happy when some little hut or home glows with joy because of our little act of kindness. As Swamiji tells us always, the greatest and brightest lamp is the one of joy which we can light by our acts of kindness.



BHARAT DARSHAN

THE GLORY OF ANDAL

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

Today we are going to a temple-city that has become famous because it is connected with a great lady saint, 'Andal'. She can be compared with Mirabai. Everything about Andal's life is mysterious and divine—her birth, her love for Lord Krishna, her immortal hymns and her marriage to the Lord.

Fifty miles south of Madurai is 'Sri Villi Puttur', the place of Andal. It is said that once, the whole area was a forest of Shenbaga trees (which have fragrant flowers). Two sages were cursed to become hunters and they lived in this forest. Villi and Kantan, by name, they were a source of terror to all the animals. Kantan was killed by a tiger. The grief - stricken brother, Villi, wanted to end his life. But he was given a divine command to clear the forest, establish a town and build a temple.

Villi planned the city and brought learned people from far, to inhabit it. He built a Vishnu temple. The place came to be known as Villi Puttur (Villi's new city). We have seen earlier that the term 'Sri' denotes sanctity and beauty.

Early in the 8th century, a great poet and saint called Vishnu Chittar (one who always thinks of Vishnu) lived in Srivilliputtur. He found great joy in gathering flowers and preparing garlands for the Lord of the temple. The Lord was called Vata-patra-Sai (banyan-leaf-reclíner), the Lord who sleeps on the banyan leaf. There is a concept that when the Universe is dissolved in a deluge, Lord Vishnu reclines on a floating banyan leaf. The deity of this place is in a reclining posture, on his couch Adisesha, under a banyan tree, attended by Sages Bhrigu and Markandeya.

One day, Vishnu Chittar had gone to the flower garden at dawn. Under a Tulsi plant, he found a fascinating baby girl. Realising that the child was the Lord's gift, he rushed home with the treasure and handed it over to his wife. They named the child "Kothai" (the spotless one) and showered their loving care and attention on her. As Kothai grew up, she exhibited a remarkab'e love for Krishna and his expl ts. In all her play with her companions, she transported herself to Brindavan and thought of herself as a gopi.

Her love for Krishna became so intense that she looked upon Krishna as her husband. Often she would wonder whether she would be the suitable consort of the Lord. One day, she decked herself with the garland that her father had so devoutly prepared for Vata-patra-

Sai and admired her reflection in the well water. Pleased with herself, she continued to deck herself with the garland and live in the world of divine companionship.

One day, Vishnu Chittar saw her wearing the garland and he was shocked and upset. He loved Kothai so much that he could rebuke her only in a mild way. That day there was no garland for the Lord as it was too late to gather fresh flowers. That night Vishnu Chittar had a dream in which the Lord told him. "The garlands worn by Kothai are acceptable to me as she is 'Andal', the one who has conquered me by sheer love". From that day, realising the divine nature of Kothai, he encouraged her to worship the Lord as she liked. She composed beautiful hymns expressing, in a mystic manner, the miracles of Krishna and her longing for Him. She has composed hymns, relating in great detail the dream of her wedding with Lord Krishna. When Andal was about fourteen years old, Vishnu Chittar was commanded to take her to Lord Ranganatha, the presiding deity of Srirangam. When she was led into his presence, she merged with the Lord.

Moved to tears by the disappearance of his beloved daughter, Vishnu Chittar prayed for a boon —"Lord, let the wedding ceremony take place in the temple at Srivilliputtur, in the presence of the devotees there". The boon was granted.

To-day, great importance is attached to the Andal temple that has been added on to the temple of Vata-patra-Sai. The 192 ft. gopuram (temple tower) with 12 storeys, proclaims the glory of Andal. The additions to the already existing Vishnu temple were made during the 12th and 13th centuries. Let us go into the sanctum sanctorum. We see the divine couple along with Garuda. Andal is decked as a bride; Lord Rangamannar gives darshan as a King, with the sceptre in his hand. Next to the Lord stands Garuda with folded hands. Why was this special honour of equal status given to Garuda, the Vahana of the Lord? It is in recognition of the services rendered by Garuda, in bringing the Divine couple from Srirangam to Srivilliputtur (a distance of about 150 miles) in a few minutes! In front of the deities, we see the three beautiful utsava images (images that are taken out on festivals). The wedding festival in March is a great event in the temple celebrations. In December-January there is a month-long early morning puja, when the hymns of Andal are recited by the devotees. This observance takes place in all temples in Tamil Nadu and reminds the devotees of the glory of Andal as the superb bride of the Lord.

Brush aside pride and vanity, and permit God to work in and through you—

Jolly & Maker

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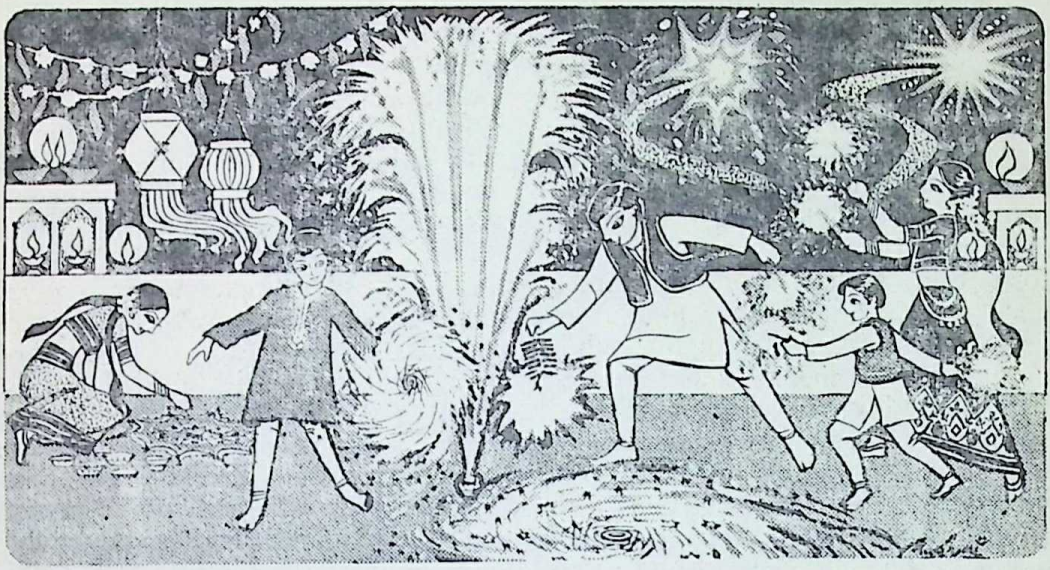
"We are scared of bombs"

By Maya C. Malani.



The following children were interviewed for this article:

Seven year-old	**Mimi Malani**
Eight year-old	**Ashish Pershad**
Nine year-old	**Arvind Nagarajan**
Ten year-old	**Supriya Gupte and Sunita Monga**
Eleven year-old	**Sharmistha Choudhury, Renuka Harchandani, Mohit Malani and Ashoo Pratap**
Twelve year-old	**Manish Gupte, Sanjay Khanna, Jay Pershad and Mitali Sethi**
Thirteen year-old	**Jagdish Suvarna**
Fourteen year-old	**Vijay Kumar Jain/ Ravindra Pradhan**
Fifteen year-old	**Girija Vasudevan**

MOST children wait anxiously for Divali because they like to "burst " crackers. However most of the seventeen children interviewed were "scared of bombs", and nine stayed away from them. Only four children, Sanjay, Jagdish, Ravindra and Girija felt that crackers were not dangerous. Girija Vasudevan turned out to be the only girl who was not at all scared of crackers. "I like to burn bombs and rockets", she said.

Eleven year-old Ashoo Pratap explained why she avoided bombs: "I don't like to see them burning. Besides the noise is deafening." A young child generally leaves such a daring task to his elder brother or sister. No wonder the "elders"

claim that they are not scared of bombs, although they admit that they are dangerous. Vijay Kumar Jain, who has three younger brothers and a sister, said frankly "I am scared of getting burnt. Everybody is".

Their fears are justified as every Diwali there are cases of burn injuries. "A box bomb burst in my hand and it became hard and red," said Mohit, Mimi's elder brother. He could not write for days. Jay Pershad, Ashish's elder brother had a similar experience. According to him, "the enthusiasm during Diwali can be dangerous." In fact, "safety crackers are not so safe," in Manish Gupte's opinion. A spark from a bomb hit his dad's nylon shirt. Luckily Manish stifled it before it could cause any damage. He felt that square bombs were safer than the round ones.

Nevertheless, it has been proved time and again that no bomb is safe. This does not mean that other crackers are safe. Even "phuljadis" can be unsafe. Renuka Harchandani is very particular about wearing slippers because she once stepped barefoot on a red-hot sparkler. She also avoids nylon clothes during Diwali as they burn much faster than cotton.

Sharmistha Choudhury avoids whistles and rockets in addition to bombs. But there is no doubt that bombs are definitely the most dangerous crackers. Each year the police issues its ban on bombs. Each year, without fail, the people ignore it, risking a burn injury.

The chain bombs, which last from fifteen minutes to half an hour, are the most frightening. The noise is like machine-gun fire. It is impossible to sleep while the "explosion" takes place.

According to Mitali Sethi, "it is alright on Diwali night but not for a whole week." Among the older boys, the enthusiasm seems to have died down. "Within my age-group, boys are not too interested in bursting crackers," said fourteen year-old Ravindra Pradhan. This does not seem too surprising because soon after the Diwali holidays, they have their exams.

Is it right, for the pleasure of a few to disturb the sleep of so many people? Agreed, Diwali comes only once a year and should be celebrated. But need it be celebrated in such a boisterous way, especially since there are so many, other aspects of it that children like?

Arvind Nagarajan likes the puja performed in his house. All the neighbours are invited to it. The children have fun doing 'rangoli' outside their flats. In fact, in most buildings, children get together and enjoy Diwali in groups. Youngsters like sending Diwali cards and meeting their friends and relatives. New clothes are made for the

There are two kinds of people: those who are part of the problem and who are part of the solution—

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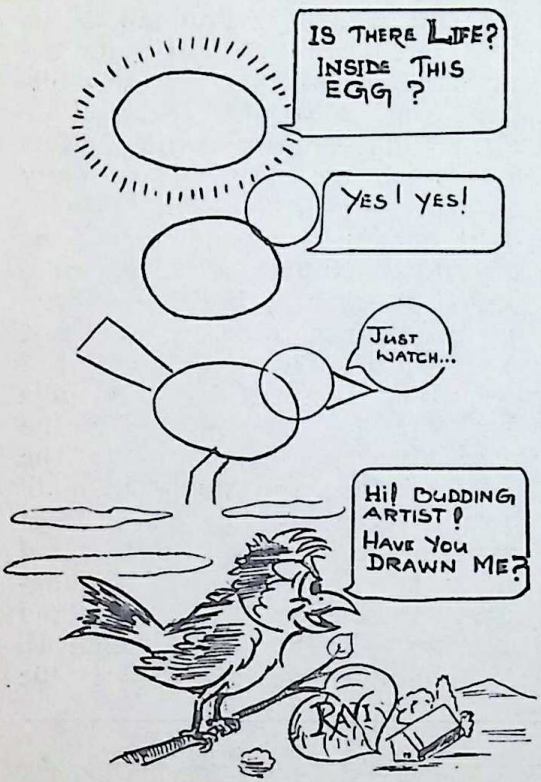
occasion. Children also love eating the 'mithai' which is generally exchanged at this time. 'Diyas' and candles are lit in the evening, but kept ready in the afternoon. The festive spirit is in the air.

"I want Diwali to come fast," said Sanjay Khanna impatiently. We all look forward to it. But from now on, let us be more careful with crackers. Playing with fire can be dangerous.

LEARN TO DRAW



World Timings

When it is 12 noon in India (Indian Standard Time), do you know the local time in some of the important capitals of the world?

Baghdad		8–30 a.m.
Bangkok	...	1–30 p.m.
Berlin	...	7–30 a.m.
Canberra	...	4–30 p.m.
Cairo	...	8–30 a.m.
Dacca	...	12–30 p.m.
London	...	6–30 a.m.
Moscow	...	8–00 a.m.
New York	...	1–30 a.m.
Oslo	...	7–30 a.m.
Ottawa	...	2–30 a.m.
Peking	...	2–30 p.m.
Rangoon	...	1–00 p.m.
Rome	...	7–30 a.m.
San Francisco (Previous day)	...	11–30 a.m.
Singapore	...	2–00 p.m.
Stockholm	...	7–30 a.m.
Tehran	...	3–30 p.m.
Tokyo		10–00 a.m.

By Rajan Damodaran

RIDDLES

1. A man lives in a flat on the twentieth floor. When he comes down, he comes down in a lift. But when he goes up, he always gets down on the twelfth floor and walks to the twentieth floor. Why?
2. Which is the strongest day of the week?
3. Where was the first tree planted?

Answers on page 18

PROBLEMS?

Do you have a problem? If you do please write and tell us. We shall try and solve it. Remember two heads are better than one, so don't worry. Write a letter and pass your worries on to us.

You need not be afraid about your name being published. If you don't want your name to appear in Bal Vihar, please write and tell us and we shall not disclose it.

Don't forget to mention your age and the class which you are in. This will help Kamath uncle to give the correct solution to your problem.

Dear Kamath Uncle,

I am a student of Std IX. I was brilliant and exceptionally good in studies till Std VII, with the result I used to help my weaker colleagues. Suddenly, since the last two years I find I am unable to maintain my excellent progress. I am working hard, perhaps harder at my work but I find to my amazement the very students (friends) whom I helped in studies progressing better than me.

No ! I am not jealous of them. In fact I am happy at their progress. But the thought naturally comes to me, what is wrong with my own progress? I have helped so many friends in studies all this time and why is my own progress now not as good as theirs, if not better?" This thought has lately made me frustrated.

I cannot understand the reason for this.

These days I find myself a bit short-tempered and moody. Can it be due to my deterioration in progress in school ? Please advise and guide me.

Yours sincerely,
Sunil

Dear Sunil,

IT is possible that your poor performance at school may be due to your "short temper" or "mood". As you suggest yourself, your bad temper could also be due to your not-so-good performance at school. Believe me, such things are normal at your age. All boys and girls about your age experience this problem. The result is that they lose their concentration. Studying no longer remains the pleasure it was.

Sunil, how is it that your are studying harder and yet not making the grade? Are you pushing the roller instead of pulling it? I am sure you know that pulling a roller is easier than pushing it. While a single person can pull a roller, to push the same roller two men may be required. Similarly, if you study systematically, you will learn more with less effort than usual.

I strongly recommend to you this method. When you come back from school and finish playing, devote an hour or two to what has been taught in the class on that

particular day. This sort of daily revision is a must. If you find any subject or chapter difficult, please seek help. You may approach your teachers, parents, neighbours or friends.

Perhaps you are finding it difficult to study because of the new words used in your text-books. Make constant use of a dictionary or encyclopaedia.

While studying make it a point to UNDERSTAND what you read. Reading chapters twice or thrice helps you to understand your lessons better. Recitation (reading out aloud to oneself) is a great aid to understanding and memory. Try these methods, will you?

Do find out if your friends are taking tuitions. That could explain their superior performance. If you feel that you also need guidance (coaching) from outside, go right ahead. When I was in Standard IX, I did take help from relatives and tutors. After some time, I could study on my own.

About your "mood" and "short temper", I suggest you get engrossed in some hobbies. Read books and magazines regularly. Why don't you read "Tom Brown's School Days" by Thomas Hughes? Stories from Panchatantra, Ramayana and Mahabharata will give you peace of mind. Take part in sports, collect stamps and pictures and anything you like. All this should make you happy.

In short, I would advise you to (a) study systematically and thoroughly and (b) get engaged in hobbies.

Yours sincerely
G. R. Kamath

The Servant's Daughter

MINU lived with her mother in a village. They were very poor. So her mother had to go and work in Sethji's house.

Minu could not afford to go to school. Instead she went with her mother to Sethji's house. There she would run errands for Sethji's wife.

Sethji had a daughter called Seema. She was very proud. Every day as she went to school, Minu would carry her school bag upto her school.

In the evening, she would wait at the school gate to carry her school bag back home. She would watch enviously the many games that Seema and her friends played. Minu longed to join them but could not.

One evening Minu plucked up the courage to ask Seema who was playing, "Can I also join you?" But the naughty Seema said, "No you can't. Do your work. You are my servant's daughter and you do not go to school". These harsh words hurt Minu.

She sighed sadly as she went back home with her mother that day. They did not have anything to eat except a small bowl of gruel which both of them shared. They went to bed on the hard cold floor of their hut while Seema ate a good dinner and slept on her soft luxurious bed.

By S. V. Veena, VIII Std.
Chinmaya Vidyalaya
Rajapalayam.

The Rogue Umpire

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala

THE Sun had set. The night was fast approaching. Yet the crow-chicks in the sprawling banyan tree were wide awake. They were cawing for their regular bed-time story. Scolding the young ones, Grandpa Kaw flew down from his branch and said, "Quiet, you naughty children. You'll wake up the whole trees-neighbourhood". "Tell us a story then," they cried with one voice.

"Okay, Okay, tonight I'll tell a story about my friend, Fat-face, the partridge".

"Many years ago," said Grandpa Kaw, "beneath this same tree dwelt a partridge. Since we were bachelors and near neighbours, we became very good friends in course of time. Every day on our return to the tree, we spent our evening hours in entertaining each other with jokes. stories and repeating what we did that day.

"One day Fat-face went with other bird-friends to a spot where the rice was ripe and abundant. He did not return at nightfall. Many days passed. I grieved for my friend, for I was sure that he was either caught in a trap or killed.

"Then one evening, a rabbit called Speedy made himself comfortable in the partridge's old nest in the hole. I did not stop him for I had no hopes of seeing Fat-face again.

"However, after a couple of months one fine day, my friend the partridge, having grown extremely plump from eating rice, returned to his old home.

"When he saw the rabbit, he ordered him to vacate his home. Speedy refused, saying, "Fat-face, don't you know that a dwelling is yours only while you occupy it?".

"The partridge in turn admonished him and accused him of stealing

is house. He also sought my help to throw the rabbit out of the nest.

"The rabbit did not budge. He claimed the ownership of the house by pointing out that men can have the title to possession after ten years' habitation, but with birds and beasts it is mere present occupation that counts.

"Fat-face refused to accept this and suggested that they should consult an impartial specialist. The other agreed. They set out to find one. I too followed them.

"We had not gone far when we saw a cat doing penance on the sandy banks of the Ganges. Seeing the holy cat, the patridge thought that he could be their judge. The terrified rabbit shook his head, "No! no! He looks a seedy rascal. How can we trust him? He is our natural enemy. If we go near him he will pounce on us."

"Upon hearing this Curled-Ear, the cat, who was pretending piety to get an easy prey, started chanting loudly—"Better than flowers, fruits, butter, curds, oil-cakes; better than mortal man is morality. There is no holier commandment than to be kind to all, merciful to even mosquitoes, lice and fleas. Who can speak of hurting innocent ones, for hell awaits the one who hurts even the harmful beasts?"

"Through these wise words, Curled-Ear gained the trust of the partridge and the rabbit. The rogue-cat made them sit near him, to listen to their problem better. I perched on a branch nearby. Then as Fat-face and Speedy were telling him their troubles, Curled—Ear simultaneously seized them—one with his paw and the other with his saw-teeth. And made a good meal of them.

"Saddened by what I saw, I flew away—a wiser bird. I had learnt a good lesson—always choose your umpire with care, lest he turns out to be your enemy"

After Grandpa Kaw finished the story, the crow-chicks went to sleep. Perhaps some dreamt of Fat-face, others of Curled-Ear and Speedy.

ANSWERS TO RIDDLES

1. Because he was short and he could reach only the twelfth switch. He pressed it, came to the twelfth floor and walked up to the twentieth floor. The twentieth switch is on top of all the other switches.

   By V. Vidula (9 years)

2. Sunday because the others are 'week' days.
3. On the ground

   By Rajan Damodaran

Answers to Fill in the Squares

1. Giraffe—gun, imp, rat, ant, fat, fun and eat.
2. Alsatian.
3. Onion.

RAMAYANA

SAGE VISWAMITRA (Contd.)

By Anantha Narayanan

Armed with power and full of arrogance and anger, the over-confident Viswamitra rushed to the sage's ashram and destroyed it. To teach Viswamitra a lesson, the calm Sage Vasishta met him with his Holy Staff — Brahmadanda— a symbol of spiritual power. Miraculously, all the powerful weapons of Viswamitra disappeared into the staff! Surprised at this unexpected turn of events, Viswamitra used the Brahmastra—the most powerful weapon he had obtained against the sage! Though the whole world trembled by this act of the King, to the utter amazement of all, the Holy staff coolly absorbed the Astra and Sage Vasishta shone like a Sun!

Viswamitra who was unbelievably shocked, gracefully accepting defeat, roared thus : धिक् बलंक्षत्रिय बलं, ब्रह्म तेजो बलं बलम् ।

"Kshatriya might of arms, however great, is utterly useless! Spiritual prowess is real power!" For, before his very eyes, with a mere staff, Sage Vasishta had destroyed all his weapons!!

Here, we have two examples of the power of tapas. Viswamitra misused it like the Rakshasas for greed and selfishness and failed. Sage Vasishta's power of tapas, acquired for self-development and social welfare, protected him and others!

Inspired by Sage Vasishta's example to become a Brahmarishi, Viswamitra again did rigorous tapas on Lord Brahma for many years. Being satisfied with Viswamitra's efforts, Brahma appeared and said that he had become a Rishi amongst Kings—a Raja Rishi. Disappointed that the tapas had not raised him to the status of Brahmarishi, he wished to try again and performed still more terrible tapas.

Unfortunately, there was an interruption.

At that time, Trisanku was the king of the Solar Dynasty. He was so fond of his beautiful body that he wished to go to Heaven with it. So, he approached his Guru Vasishta, who without fear or favour, advised him that this was impossible. Disregarding his Guru's advice, Trisanku approached the sage's sons for help. Being dutiful sons of the sage, they ridiculed his foolish idea.

Overpowered by desire, Trisanku felt very disappointed. He told them that since the father and sons were too weak in spiritual power, he would approach others who were more powerful. The sage's sons

The higher the level of intelligence, the less the disposition to be meddlesome, critical and overbearing—

Dharm Sangeet Shringar

Opp: Ram Mandir, Gowliguda, Hyderabad-500 012. (A.P.)

regarded this remark as a great insult to their father, who was also the King's Guru. Hence, they cursed Trisanku for his arrogance to become a Chandala!

Immediately, the king's appearance changed beyond recognition to one of an ugly creature, filthy and stinking. As nobody could recognise him, he was thrown out of the kingdom to wander about in the forest, sick and hungry. One day by chance, he happened to come to Viswamitra's ashram.

Recognizing the king, Viswamitra enquired of him the reasons for his sad plight. Trisanku narrated the entire episode and sought refuge. Moved by compassion, Viswamitra promised to help the king in his objective of reaching heaven in a bodily form, inspite of the curse of the Guru!

Perhaps, the impulsive Viswamitra was reminded of his earlier defeat by Vasishta and wanted to show by his newly acquired spiritual power that he could do what Vasishta could not!

Accordingly, he conducted a great yagna for the purpose. All the Rishis including Vasishta's sons, were invited to participate in the yagna. The latter not only did not attend but ridiculed Viswamitra for performing a yagna like this.

The enraged Viswamitra, in a fit of revenge, severaly cursed Vasishta's sons to be born as savages!

Though the yagna was completed,

the Gods refused to come and accept the offerings as the object of the yagna was not capable of being achieved. Thus, the effort was a total failure and Viswamitra felt greatly insulted. Terribly angry and upset, he offered the merit (पुण्य) of his tapas to enable Trisanku to

Desire is an expression of a sense of incompleteness and happiness is a state of desirelessness—
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387, Narsi Natha Street, Bombay - 400 009.

ascend to heaven. To the amazement of all, due to the power of Viswamitra's mighty tapas, Trisanku ascended and reached heaven! Indra, the king of Gods, however, pushed Trisanku down saying that he was not fit to enter heaven bodily, moreso, with the curse of his Guru.

Frantically shouting for Viswamitra's help, Trisanku fell towards the earth head down! Viswamitra got more furious and with all the power at his command ordered Trisanku to stop! To the utter surprise of all, Trisanku was suspended in the middle, shining like a star! Viswamitra further began to create another heaven with a galaxy of stars in space!!

To be Continued.

CRICKET

The Strokes of Freedom
G. R. Viswanath

Hello Sportslovers!

BATSMEN with one-fourth the talent of Viswanath have got twice the number of runs Viswanath has in Test Cricket. Though he set a record in his very first Test, of being one of a handful of Indians to score a century on debut, records in themselves have never worried Viswanath. Speaking of records, Viswanath is the only Indian debutant—centurian to have scored more than one Test century. The rest, Lala Amarnath, Kripal Singh, Abbas Ali Baig etc. have not reached a Test hundred after their initial bright starts.

What motivates Viswanath is the challenge of good bowling. Give him a fast bowler bowling at his best on a fast, bouncy wicket, or a spinner exploiting a worn out

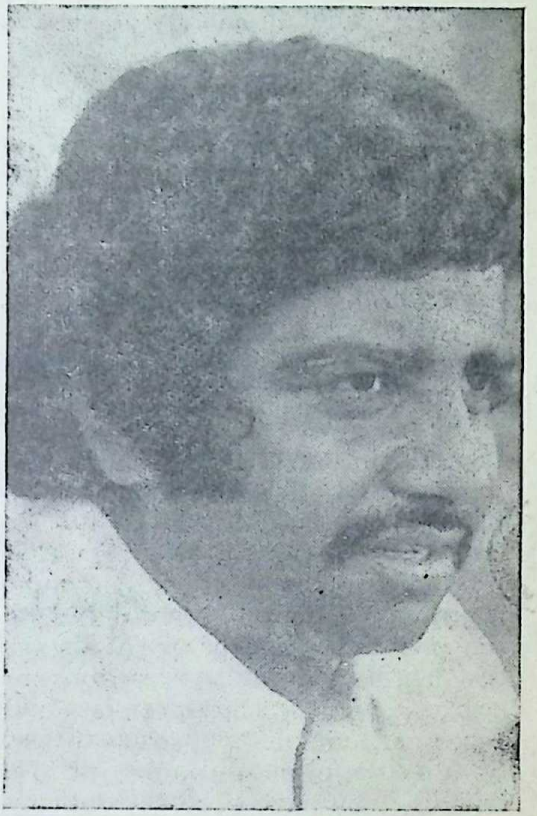


Photo : Courtesy Sportsweek
G. R. Viswanath

Devotion is resting on God—
Shri Govindabhai K. Raja
63/F, Napean Sea Road, "Suvas Apartments", 4th Floor, Bombay-400 006.

wicket, and you have Viswanath at his best. Under such conditions, Viswanath may not get a hundred. But you can be sure that his will be the major contribution to either win or draw the Test, or go down fighting gloriously for his country. For example, when the rest of his colleagues were folding up against the West Indies, before the sustained hostile attack of Clarke, Phillips etc. at Madras, it was Viswanath who almost single-handedly, steered India to victory.

Unkind critics who criticise him for getting out very often in the thirties and forties, and blame it on his lack of concentration, are forgetting that with Viswanath, it is not quantity but quality that matters. Every run bears the stamp of undoubted world class. His lack of inches and perfect placements belie the power behind his strokes.

In the Indian team, Gavaskar is the cricket scientist who measures the bowling, the way the pitch is playing and then after analysing the conditions, either curbs or goes for his shots, as the situation demands. Viswanath, on the other hand, is the poet whose every stroke sings of the beauty and freedom of cricket itself. The scientist and the poet complement each other, both on the pitch and off it. Close friends, they have become brothers-in-law with Gavaskar's youngest sister, Kavita having married Viswanath. Gavaskar and Viswanath-two names synonymous with all that's good in Indian Cricket.

—*Bharat Savur*

Children venture into the Himalayas

By Maya

Only once did they have jelly for desert. They enjoyed it although the weather was very cold.

It was impossible to wash clothes during the entire trip. Neither could they have a bath on most of the 21 days. At the most, whenever the sun came out, they could dry their clothes and airmattresses.

Nevertheless, the children got used to the climate very fast. The doctors, who checked their blood pressure and pulse regularly, found that acclimatisation in children was better than in adults. Only three children vomited and had headaches due to the high altitude. But they were alright after reaching the base camp. After 15,000′ the children showed signs of loss of appetite, "but we forced them to have liquids," said Dr. Joshi

DANGERS OF MOUNTAINEERING

There was a snowfall of 11/2′ to 2′ daily. In fact, it was often necessary to shake the snow off the tents and shovel it. Otherwise the tents would collapse on the people inside. One had to get up in the middle of the night to shovel snow. Generally the grown-ups did it but Parvez and Histasp, who were sleeping in a separate tent, did it themselves.

One night, James had a strange experience. As he and George were about to fall asleep, somebody

tapped on his head from outside. Dismissing it as his imagination, he fell asleep. He was woken up at 3 a. m. by a commotion outside. When he got up and looked out, he saw the porters chasing something. All he could make out was a black dot disappearing in the distance. The next morning, the tell-tale foot-prints in the snow backed by the porters' story, confirmed that a bear had been their visitor that night.

The other dangers of mountaineering are avalanches. One could detect them by the rumbling sound followed by boulders and snowdust tumbling down. On one of their trial climbs to Beaskund (12,500'), they met a group which had been caught in an avalanche while scaling Hanuman Tibba. Luckily, except for a wrist injury to one man, the rest escaped unhurt as a boulder broke their fall.

To be Continued.

Nothing but the vast black sea

By Jyoti Ramakrishnan (17 *years*)

The sun, they said, was a huge red ball,
The streams, they said, did wonderfully fall,
Sun nor streams I could see
For all that stood was a vast black sea.

Flowers, they said, had a heavenly beauty
Buds they said were very pretty
Flowers nor buds I could see
For all that stood was a vast black sea.

The stars, they said, did brightly glow,
The rivers, they said, did joyfully flow
Stars nor rivers I could see
For all that stood was a vast black sea.

Mountains, they said, were huge and high
The background, they said, was the beautiful sky,
Sky nor mountains I could see
For all that stood was a black sea.

Animals nor men I could see
Neither could I see the muttering bee
For all that I was destined to see
was nothing but the vast black sea.

You criticise others. Are you faultless?
With Prem and Om
Chinmaya Family, Kuwait.

Think !

Let us not worry for the recognition or for the reward but let us be more anxious about the quality of our work.

—Swami Chinmayananda

When we act, we worry about what we will gain from that action. In the process, the quality of our work suffers. We should concentrate on how we do the work rather than what we will get from doing it. This is the thought for the month.

Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Bal Vihar. The last date for sending in entries is December 15th, so send your entry soon.

The Winner !

The Winner of the thought for the month of August is Geeta Hariharan of Bombay (15 years). Congratulations! We are sending you "The Bhagavad Geeta in nineteen talks" as a gift.

Face Facts Boldly and Succeed

RAVI and Gopu were bosom friends, the former a brave lad and the latter timid. Once they went for a long walk, lost their way and reached a remote village. The sun had set. Darkness had spread all over and there was no hope of returning home that night. Ravi consoled Gopu and both of them sat on the footsteps of an old house in the village. The house seemed to be deserted.

Soon two villagers came that way and approached Ravi and Gopu. "This house is haunted", warned the first villager.

"Yes, evil spirits reign here at night", added the second.

"Why do you say so?" enquired Ravi.

"When we step out from this house after switching off the electric

Dreaming is not so bad if one dreams good dreams and makes them come true—

Polyplastics Corporation

105-106, A - Z Industrial Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Bombay-400 013.

lights, they are on again within minutes!" explained the first villager. Gopu stood up, looking nervous. "Evil spirits work here when we retire from the house", confirmed the second villager and suggested "if you want to see, please stay in this house to-night".

Gopu, trembling with fear, urged Ravi to leave the place at once and go elsewhere in the village.

Ravi was a boy of great courage and determination. He wanted to find out the truth. He decided to stay there and to investigate, even if he was left alone.

Gopu ran away to a nearby house to take shelter.

As night advanced, Ravi and the two villagers stepped into the old house.

Ravi switched on the lights. Hours passed in silence and in suspense.

Then Ravi boldly switched off the lights. Shrieking, the villagers ran out of the house to escape from the possible attacks of the evil spirits.

Ravi heard eerie sounds, yet he stood unmoved and firm.

Lo! Truly, the lights were on again!

He carefully watched and repeatedly switched off the lights, but every time, after some moments, the lights came on again!

Finally, Ravi burst into laughter. He observed that the switches were very loose and when the lights were switched off, rats running over the switch-board, invariably pressed the switches on by their weight.

How simple is the truth!

Brave Ravi! He faced facts, solved the mystery and brought relief to all concerned.

By Geeta Hariharan
(15 years)

DO YOU KNOW THESE CITIES?

A few words ending with "city" are given below. Can you guess what they are?

1. The 'city' that gives a shock.
2. The 'city' that is fast.
3. The 'city' that is wise.
4. The 'city' that is truthful.

Answers on page 23

RIDDLES

1. What can you find if you search for?
2. What would a diamond become in a basin of water?

By Rajan Damodaran
(16 years)

3. What has teeth yet cannot bite?
. When we knock out its eye, only its nose remains. What is it?

By Sanjeev Shah

Answers on page 23

Happiness is one of the attributes of man which eludes the most determined search and comes unsought and in the most unexpected places—

Vijay Corporation
65, Ideal Industrial Estate, Mathuradas Mills Compound, Lower Parel, Bombay-400 013.

Shalu's tribute to

CHACHA NEHRU

on his 90th Birth Anniversary

DID you know that November 14th is Children's Day? I am sure you did. It is our great leader, Jawaharlal Nehru's birthday. Chacha Nehru, as you and I know him, was born in 1889 in Allahabad.

As a child, he was extremely lonely as most of his schooling was done at home. He read a lot. Some of his favourite books were "Alice in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll and "Kim" by Rudyard Kipling. Like other little boys and girls, he loved playing with a magnet and his geometry box.

At that time, India was ruled by the British. Even as a little boy, Jawaharlal pondered about India's freedom. Often, he would dream of how he would fight the enemy with a sword and set India free.

At the age of 15, Jawaharlal was sent to a public school at Harrow. Here, he was even more lonely. He was also homesick. He found the English boys of his own age rather dull. You see, he was well ahead of his class in intelligence. Every day, he read the newspapers, which I think you should do too. And he was the only boy who knew the names of all the Ministers.

Late Shri Jawaharlal Nehru presenting a flower to a labourer's child at Bogodora (on his way to Bhutan on September 16, 1956.

While Jawaharlal was winning prizes after prizes in Harrow, a lot of things were happening in India. Under Mahatma Gandhi's influence, Indians were boycotting British goods and buying only Indian things. Jawaharlal was deeply stirred when he heard this, but there was no one with whom he could share his feelings.

At the age of 22, he returned home to India after doing law.

He who contributes to the sum total of human knowledge is not merely the benefactor of a nation; but of the whole world—

Jolly & Maker

Maker Bhavan No. 2, New Marine Lines, Bombay - 400 020.

Full of fire and enthusiasm, he was determined to throw himself into India's struggle for freedom. But he was disappointed. At the Congress session, in which he was a delegate, he found that the other members were all from rich homes. They spoke only English and copied the dress and habits of the British. He felt that they did not represent the true India.

In 1914, the First World War broke out. The British and their allies fought against the Germans and their allies. India helped Britain. But the war only strengthened the Indians' feelings about their own freedom. Gradually, Jawaharlal was drawn into politics like a moth to a flame. He wanted to tell his people a lot of things, but he was too shy to give speeches. His very first speech was in English. But he was not happy as he felt that he should speak in Hindi.

In 1916, Jawaharlal was married to Kamala Kaul, who also joined the struggle for freedom.

The First World War came to an end in 1918. The Indians, once again, demanded freedom. But the British passed new laws. Now Indians could be sent to prison even without a trial. The Indians were humiliated and angry. One day in 1919, all the people closed down their shops in protest.

A huge crowd had gathered at the Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar. Political leaders were making stirring speeches. Suddenly without warning Britain's General Dyer ordered his men to open fire on the crowd. Thousands of people were killed by this cruel act. They had no way of escaping as the garden was surrounded by a wall.

The whole world was shocked. Jawaharlal worked very hard. He travelled a lot. He met the poor peasants of India and saw how they lived. They were treated very badly by the landlords. After meeting him, many of them joined the freedom struggle of the nation.

The British Government appointed the Simon Commission to find out if India was fit for self-rule. Angry Indians led by Congress leaders, one of whom was Jawaharlal , greeted them with loud shouts of "Simon , go back!" Jawaharlal was arrested many times and put in prison. But even in these dark dungeons, he did not waste his time. He wrote his autobiography and his famous book "The Discovery of India" . He wrote letters to his daughter Indira which were later published as a book called "Glimpses of World History."

On August 15, 1947, India gained her independence. "We have so built the noble mansion of free India where all our children may dwell," said Jawaharlal, who was appointed the first Prime Minister.

Chacha Nehru was greatly loved by all children. He too loved them and always found time for them inspite of his busy life. At large rallies where he was garlanded, he would often remove his garland and throw it to a child.

Continued on page 11

My Country

I am proud of India, my country
It is a land full of natural beauty
With mighty mountains and great rivers
With fertile soil and good harbours.

India is a vast country
Having unity in diversity
She is rich in scenic beauty
And has variety in plenty.

She is the motherland of sages and seers
and the birth place of many peers
She is famous for her temples of old
Which glitter and seimmer in gold.

India is a sovereign nation
faced with explosion in population
She is troubled with the problem of inflation
which has caused a lot of botheration.

The excitement of election
has caused much commotion
and the only salvation
for the coming generation
is to hope for India, my conntry,
all joy and prosperity.

By Rashmi Patankar
(11 years)

CALLING ALL WRITERS !

Do you remember the contest announced in the January 1979 issue of Bal Vihar? The best article, story and poem of the year will be given a prize each.
Please note that the entries for the contest should reach us latest by November 30th 1979 so that we have sufficient time for selection.

Friendliness knows no bounds. It surmounts all barriers; it navigates all seas.

Shri Govindabhai K. Raja
63/F, Napean Sea Road, "Suvas Apartments" 4th Floor Bombay-400 006.

The Birthday Present

By Chitra Rao

"Tiny wake up. I can't find Mummy anywhere", said Little shaking her sister.

"Oh, let me sleep. Mummy must be outside talking to the neighbours", she replied turning back to go to sleep.

"I have looked around for her but she is not there", replied Little. "Are you sure?" asked Tiny getting out of bed.

Both of them went out together, but there was no sign of their mother.

Just as they were turning around to go back into the house, Tiny cried out, "There she is", pointing out to Mrs. Ant who was hurrying towards them.

"Mummy, where have you been? We were so scared", said Little. "I had gone to the temple' replied Mrs. Ant.

"Temple? Is there a festival today?" asked Tiny.

"No, it is my birthday today. That is why I had been to the temple".

"Happy Birthday, Mummy" wished both the little ants.

"Come on in, I'll get your breakfast ready now", she said, taking them in.

"Tiny, we must get her a present", said Little as soon as they were alone.

"Yes I know, but what can we get her?" asked Tiny.

"After breakfast, let us go out and see if we can find something to give her," suggested Little.

But the two ants had to stay and help their mother and it was only around 11 o'clock that they could go out. They kept looking around for something to give her but they could not find anything.

"Tiny listen, I can hear some people shouting," said Little.

"Yes, let's go and see what they are doing," replied Tiny.

They went towards the clearing from where the sounds were coming. They saw some people having a picnic. Some children were running about, playing games, while the elders sat around talking.

"Tiny, don't go too close! You might get stamped by the children running around" warned Little.

"Look Little, that little boy there has dropped a piece of biscuit and there is some sugar on it. If only we could get it, we could give it to Mummy", said Tiny, pointing towards the tree, near which the biscuit had been dropped.

"But we can't go there and get it,' said Tiny. "It's so sad, we have found a present but we can't get it".

"Look Tiny, there is Mrs Mynah", cried Little pointing out to the bird who flew down very close to them.

"So what?" asked Little.

"Don't you see? We can ask her to get the biscuit for us," replied Tiny.

Mrs Mynah was very surprised to see them"What are you doing here? she asked.

"Mrs Mynah, it is Mummy's birthday today and we came here hoping to find a present for her. We have found one but we need your help to get it. One of the children there has dropped a piece of biscuit. Could you get it for us?" asked the ants.

"Sure, come and show me where it has fallen and I'll get it for you", replied Mrs. Mynah.

"There it is," said Little pointing out the spot where it had fallen. When Mrs. Mynah got there, she was shooed away by the lady sitting close by, but the second time, she was able to pick it up. "Here you are!" she said giving them the biscuit.

"Here Little, you take one piece and I'll take the other", said Tiny.

Soon both of them reached home with their presents.

"Where have you been so long?" asked Mrs. Ant opening the door.

"We had gone out to get you a present," they replied, giving her the two pieces of biscuit.

"Oh thank you, but where did you get it from?" she asked.

They then told her all about the picnic and Mrs. Mynah.

"This evening, I'll prepare some sweets for you with this sugar", said Mrs. Ant.

"Aren't we lucky, finding the sugar? We can have some sweet now", said Tiny.

CHACHA NEHRU

Continued from page 8

He wanted all children to lead a strong and healthy life. He also wanted them to learn that all communities were the same, whether they were Hindus, Muslims or Christians. He felt that this was the only way India could progress.

When he died in 1964, the whole nation wept for we had lost a great and beloved leader. Every year on November 14th , India pays homage to this great man who worked so hard for his people. Now it is upto us to carry on all his good work.

BHARAT DARSHAN
COURTALLAM WATERFALLS

By Dr. R. Vajreswari

TO-DAY we are visiting two temples. One of them is in the famous town of Courtallam, noted for its waterfalls.

About 50 km. west of Tirunelveli is Ten-Kasi (Southern Varanasi). A Pandya King named Parakrama Pandian, had returned from his pilgrimage to Varanasi. He wanted the people of his kingdom to derive the pleasures and benefits of that pilgrimage. But he was aware of the great obstacles and difficulties involved in the long journey. He prayed to Lord Viswanatha for a solution. The Lord appeared in his dream and told him to build a city on the banks of the river Chirrar, and establish a temple dedicated to Viswanatha and Lokambikai.

Delighted by the divine command, the king spent all his time and money on the project. In six years, the temple was completed. On the day of dedication, people thronged the temple. It was believed that the holy Ganges appeared at the Kasi Kinaru (well) in the temple premises, at the bidding of Lord Viswanatha, so that the devotees could feel the exact atmosphere of Varanasi. At the end of the ceremonies, the King prostrated in front of the Lord, expressing his gratitude for the fulfilment of his wish.

There are beautiful sculptures in the temple, revealing the skill and craftsmanship of the sculptors. The nine-storeyed tower of the temple is very attractive. Unfortunately, this tower was partly destroyed by the fire about two hundred years ago. Complete repairs have not been carried out to restore it to its original glory.

As we come out of the temple, we enjoy the cool, soothing breeze. That is the invitation from Courtallam which is about 6 km. away. The months of July, August & September are the proper season for enjoying Courtallam. People from far and near flock to this place so that they can bathe in the waterfalls. It is refreshing and invigorating to bathe in the falls.

Do you see the hill with three peaks? It is called Trikuta hill (three peaked hill). It is about 5000 ft. high. River Chirrar jumps over the hills and rushes through the forest. In its journey, it gathers herbal and mineral properties. So bathing in the falls has its medicinal effects also. There are five important falls but the most attractive one is the 'Five - falls'. Being in a holiday mood, the people bathe in the falls quite a few times every day, as it is so enjoyable.

At a little distance from these falls is the Courtallanathar temple. A very interesting story is told about the temple. I am sure you have heard of the Sage Agastya.

He came to this temple to worship and the priests did not allow him because it was a Vishnu temple and he was a Saivite. The unhappy sage went to the Muruga temple nearby and prayed. Lord Muruga gave him a tip. Sage Agastya came back to the temple dressed as a Vaishnava devotee. He was permitted even to enter the sanctum and offer worship.

Sage Agastya closed the door of the sanctum and put his hand on the head of the deity—Lord Vishnu —and prayed 'Become short'! The miracle happened. Lord Vishnu became a Sivalinga. The sage composed beautiful songs combining the glory of Vishnu and Siva. To-day we see that great Siva Linga in the shrine.

There is a separate Devi temple and there are other deities also. The 'Sthala Vriksha' (the temple tree) is a jack fruit tree. There is a Linga under that tree. As it is a sacred tree, no one plucks the fruits from it. Great is the joy of the monkeys that abound in the place, as they feast on the jack fruits.

There is a fascinating 'folk ballet' in Tamil, about Courtallam. It vividly describes the natural sights and scenes of the place, including the role of the monkeys, and the life of the tribal folk. The simple words and lilting tunes make it a popular literary work.

Before taking leave of the place, we must visit the 'Chitra Sabha' (Hall of paintings). It is a hall full of beautiful paintings. The central theme is the Dance of Nataraja. Five places are noted for the Dance of Siva and Chitra Sabha is one of them. We will be going to Chidambaram, the most famous place of Natraja.

Mulund Balavihar Celebrates Janmashtami

A section of the audience at the Gnan Sarita High School.

The recently started Bala Vihar Group in Mulund (consisting of nearly 100 children) celebrated Janmashtami on 14th August night at Gnan Sarita High School. Shri Premaya Chaitanya from Central Chinmaya Mission was the Chief Guest. There were more than 100 parents present. Shri Premaya Chaitanya spoke to the children in

Travel is a good corrective for mental near-sightedness if the traveller will cast aside his prejudices—
With Best Compliments from
Lekha, Seema and Chitra
(Cannanore Bala Vihar members)

an inspiring way about the importance of the life of Krishna. He also impressed upon the parents the need for a spiritual way of life, the significance of instilling Krishna consciousness in every one's heart and the relevance of the Chinmaya Mission Bala Vihar Study Groups and Devi Groups. The Principal of the School, Shri Joshi overwhelmed with the grand show put up by the children told the parents that it is their bounden duty to see that more Bala Vihars come up in various parts of this Mulund Suburb. He particularly emphasised that in the present times, Bala Vihars are the right answer to the dissipating influence of the cinema on the minds of children.

The children gave an excellent account of their varied talents by enacting the many scenes from Srimad Bhagavadam viz. "Krishna and Gopis dance", "Kamsa Vadam" "The Divine childhood pranks of Krishna" etc. At the stroke of midnight, the entire audience was spellbound in the highly ecstatic mood of Krishna Smaran, paving the way for the birth of spiritual Krishna in their hearts. The programme, with inspiring and highly devotional Bhajans by Shri Premaya Chaitanya, ended with the distribution of Prasad.

RAMAYANA

SAGE VISWAMITRA

By Anantha Narayanan

The Devas realised the determination, might and power of Viswamitra! Praising his glory and fame, they requested him to stop further creation. They recognized Trisanku's presence there and accepted the stars as a sign of Viswamitra's greatness. As he was very much pleased by this change in the attitude of the Devas, Viswamitra stopped further creation.

How interesting it is to know that the ancient Rishis, through their individual spiritual power, could not only attack and defend with dreaded weapons but could also create space stations and put people in space like the modern times!

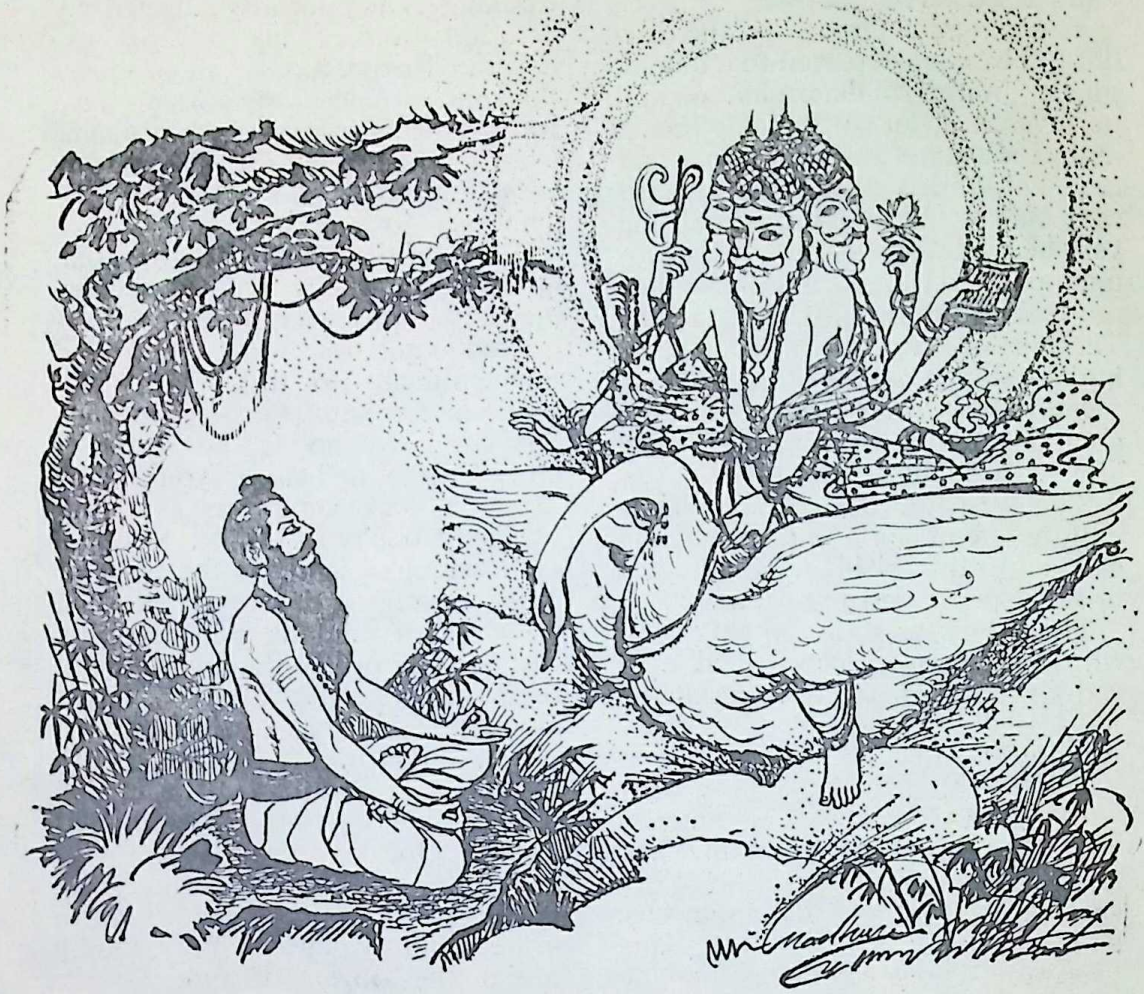
Viswamitra realised, with great regret, that he had become a victim of anger and revenge by which he had squandered the whole of his hard-earned spiritual energy! He had to start all over again!

He, therefore, went to Pushkar and continued his terrible tapas for many years, determined not to lose his temper any more. However, with all the tapas he could still only be recognized by Brahma as a Rishi and not a Brahmarishi! He resumed the tapas with more severity.

Business is an important part of life but it is not the all of life. He whose vision extends no further than his field of business is to be pitied—

Indira Construction Pvt. Ltd.,

6, Oak Lane, Fort, Bombay-400 001.



Fearing the determination of Viswamitra after their recent experience, the Devas wished to distract him. They sent down the heavenly beauty, Menaka, to tempt him. Viswamitra temporarily lost control of his senses and was attracted by her surpassing charms! He spent ten years of joy in her company, forgot the tapas and his noble resolve!!

One day, he suddenly realised his terrible mistake! Accepting his failure to control his senses, instead of blaming others, he went to the Himalayas to pursue his tapas. After a thousand years of unbroken terrible tapas, he was recognized by Brahma as a Maharshi.

As this boon was not yet a victory over his senses, Viswamitra continued his austere life for a further thousand years. Disturbed by another heavenly damsel, Rambha, sent by the gods he lost his temper

and cursed her!

Thereafter, profiting by the earlier failures, he departed to a quieter place. With firm determination and perseverance, he stopped his breath and subdued his mind so sternly that the heat of his austerities affected the entire world! Brahma, being very pleased with Viswamitra's devoted tapas and transformation, at last recognised him as Brahmarishi! Though Viswamitra was happy, he had developed enough humility to plead that a Brahmarishi like the great Sage Vasishta should bless him as a sign of sainthood!

Sage Visishta greeted Viswamitra with a serene smile and hailed him as a Brahmarishi! This event brought peace and joy to all.

This, then was the mighty sage who, of his own accord, had arrived at King Dasaratha's palace !!

Ayodhya's Affectionate Send—off

BRAHMARISHI Viswamitra was, thus, mighty in earning and lavish in spending tapas. When such a famous and dynamic sage had suddenly arrived at King Dasaratha's palace there is no wonder that all were lost in ecstasy! King Dasaratha felt all the more happy at the auspicious timing of the sage's visit, when he was considering the marriage samskara of his beloved sons!

The sage was received by the king with reverence and ceremony befitting the divinely, honoured guest, as laid down in the scriptures.

It is interesting to note that when one is overcome by joy or sorrow, one loses control over words! The thinking is temporarily affected by emotion and, many a time, exaggerated expressions and promises flow out. Hence, the wise have trained themselves to observe silence (मौन) when they are affected by such emotions and wait for the emotions to subside!

The emotional King Dasaratha, however, had the weakness of offering hasty promises which he regretted later on when he found them difficult to fulfil!

While receiving the sage in such an ecstatic mood, he said: "I consider the arrival of your Holiness, as welcome as securing nectar in one's hands, as rainfall in a waterless land, as the birth of a son through a dear wife who had no children, and as recovery of a lost treasure or like the joyous mood of a festive occasion! Great Brahmarishi! What is the supreme object of your desire that I will have the privilege to fulfil? It is indeed my extreme good fortune that such a glorious sage has purified me and this humble palace! By virtue of your Darshan, I have visited all holy places! Pray, kindly reveal the object of your visit. You need not have any doubt about the success of your mission. I am ever-ready to fulfil the demands of such an honoured guest". Thus, Dasaratha's emotions found expression in a solemn promise even before the request was made. It was like offering a blank cheque!!

Sage Viswamitra was equally thrilled to hear these unexpected words of welcome and the promise of assistance extended by the King.

To be continued.

Numskull and the rabbit

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala

LONG, long ago a big and cruel lion lived in the forest. His name was Numskull. He slaughtered the animals. If anyone passed his way, Numskull would not spare him.

All the animals of the forest-boars, deer, oxen, rabbits etc. were very worried. They moved about the forest in great fear. They did not know when their end would come.

Tired of these meaningless killings they went together to the King of beasts. "Sire," they pleaded, "have mercy on us. Please stop this senseless bloodshed."

"Then what shall I do? Do you want me to starve?", roared the lion.

"No, master, no. We'll supply you your meals. Each day, we'll send you one animal of the forest. In this way, neither your food nor our families will be cut."

They also pointed out that if the lion kept attacking them continuously, in a short time all of them would be killed. He would be left alone in the forest.

Numskull thought a while and agreed. However he threatened, "If an animal does not come to my cave every day, I promise you, I'll eat you all."

Thereafter, at noon every day one animal of each species was sent to the cave as Numskull's meal. Others roamed the wood freely.

One day , a rabbit's turn came, it being rabbit day. The poor rabbit was extremely sad. He did not want to die. He dragged himself to the cave, reflecting on the way, "How can I get rid of this pest? He is so big while I am so small. What shall I do?"

By the time the rabbit reached the cave, it was well past the lion's lunch hour. On seeing the rabbit, the famished lion became very angry. "You idiot!" he bellowed, "first, you are too small for a meal. Second, you come late. For this defiance, I'm going to tear you to pieces-limb by limb, and tomorrow I'll kill the whole lot of you."

The trembling rabbit bowed low and meekly said, "Milord, I'm not at fault. Please let me tell you what happened." The lordly lion assented.

The rabbit said, "Since everyone knew how small I was, they sent with me five other rabbits. When we had covered half the distance to the cave, a huge lion rose from a hole in the ground. He stopped us and asked where we were going. On our telling him that we were meant for your lunch table, he pushed us into the hole, claiming that he was the King of the forest, and that all the animals

belonged to him.

"When I told him we already had Numskull as our king, he slapped me on my mouth. He was furious. After his anger subsided a little, he ordered me to bring you this message.

"He calls you a freak," continued the rabbit. "You are no king. He challenges you to prove your strength in a duel with him. Whoever wins shall rule the forest kingdom."

Listening to this, Numskull was livid with rage. He forgot his hunger. Gnashing his teeth, he commanded the rabbit to lead him to the lion in the hole.

"Follow me, master," said the rabbit. The rabbit took the angry lion to the well. Numskull looked in and saw a big lion.

Being dumb, he mistook his reflection for another lion. He gave a great roar. From the well rose a roar twice as loud, because it was the echo.

On hearing this, Numskull thought that his rival was very powerful. To destroy him, he plunged into the well. The great fall broke his neck.

The rabbit carried the happy news to the other animals in the forest. They lived in peace after the death of the cruel lion.

Children venture into the Himalayas

By Maya C. Malani

All the same, there is the brighter side to mountaineering. Whenever there was a blizzard, the children enjoyed the luxury of bed tea. Besides, people are very friendly. The party they met offered them cheese and coffee and also delivered some mail. The children received letters from home addressed to the Manali Post Master, who in turn gave it to whichever team was coming up. The children also wrote letters to their parents, describing their experiences. The porters delivered these to Manali.

The experience of mountain-climbing has made the children very tough and disciplined. On one or two occasions when some of them got separated from the party, they used their head and either waited for the others to catch up with them or asked their way before proceeding further. Besides, although all of them wanted to go up to the peak, they obeyed Mr. Prabhu and stayed back, sportingly letting the fittest ones proceed.

UNFRIENDLY WEATHER AT FRIENDSHIP PEAK

The first two attempts when the entire party tried to go up to Ladies Lake (14,500') did not succeed. The first time, a little before Ladies Lake they met three Americans who had been caught in a blizzard 500' away from Friendship peak. At the second attempt, they decided not to go further as they would get benumbed and soaked in the whirling winds and heavy snowfall.

The third attempt was made by all students, along with the two doctors and two high altitude porters under the leadership of Shankaran and Mani. There were very few hours in which they could climb. The mornings were clear for three to four hours, after which there was heavy snowfall. They left the tent and some provisions at Ladies Lake and returned to base camp.

For the next three days, they could not move out due to bad weather. It was a pity that in all the fifteen days they were on the mountain, there were only three days of clear weather, the last three days. On 29th May, the three toughest boys—James, Histasp and Parvez—along with the two doctors and the three high altitude porters (Ringzing, Bada Tashi and Chota Tashi) left with Shankaran and Mani. When they reached Ladies Lake, the tent was buried under snow. They had to dig it out. It was three in the afternoon. Time was running out. They had to return to Manali on the 31st so they planned to scale Friendship peak early the next morning.

The next morning, they woke up at 4.00 a. m. After breakfast, they left for the peak at 5.30. Normally "it takes only five hours from Ladies Lake to the peak and back," according to Shankaran. The climb is

not difficult and not much equipment is required. Friendship peak is a friendly peak, and that is why it was selected for children.

Nevertheless that day the climb was difficult. They were sinking hip deep in the snow. With great determination, they reached a height of 17,000′ at 4.00 in the evening.

They were tired. Besides, they knew the golden rule of mountaineering—Climb only till 3.00 or 4.00 in the evening, so that you can return to the camp safely. Good sense won over the desire to reach the top. They turned back.

They could not make another attempt, as the bus and train reservations were made. They had to reach Manali the next day. It was with mixed feelings that they returned to Bombay on 4th June. On the one hand, it brought the curtain down on the greatest adventure of their lives. On the other, they returned to the warmth and comfort of civilisation. **Concluded.**

YOUR ATTENTION PLEASE

Subscribers are requested to quote their subscription No. (the first line of the address on the wrapper) in all their correspondence including Money Orders and Cheques sent for renewal. Omissions to do so will naturally entail delays in dealing with such correspondence and renewals.

My Servant's Child— A Friend

By Dennis Taraporewala (8 *years*)

His two bright eyes are bold and black,
His vest is torn
He's bare in the back.

His legs are long and very thin,
His voice is sweet,
When his song begins.

He sits near me as he dares
He hopes
I have some crumbs to spare.

Now guess his name
He's my servant's child—
He's called "Prem".

ANSWERS to DO YOU KNOW?

1. Electricity.
2. Velocity.
3. Sagacity.
4. Veracity.

By H. N. Shyla (12 years)

ANSWERS to RIDDLES

1. Fault
2. Wet
3. A comb
4. Noise.

The thoughts of others are as necessary to one's mental well being as food is necessary to one's physical well being—

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Think !

Let us not complain that there is not enough time. As long as we waste our time in complaining, we will never find enough time to act, win and achieve.

—Swami Chinmayananda

How often have we heard people complaining that they have absolutely no time!
We will never have enough time to achieve as long as we waste time in complaining. This is the thought for the month.
Based on it, we want you to write a short story, article or poem. The person who sends in the best entry will be given a "surprise gift" by post. His or her entry will also be published in Bal Vihar. The last date for sending in entries is January 15th, so send in your entry soon.

The Winner !

The Winner of the thought for the month of September is Meera Viswanathan of Durgapur (14 years). Congratulations Meera! We have sent you "Bal Bhagavatham" as a prize. Hope you enjoy reading it!

The spirit of dedication gives to any individual a handle to lift himself in his own life.

IN 'The Sound of Music', one might recall the advice the aged nun gave Maria when she was in the midst of her search for a vocation. 'Climb every mountain, ford every stream, follow every rainbow till you find your dream, a dream that will take all the love you can give, all the days of your life as long as you live.'

The dream here, that the nun refers to is a mission. Every one of us has a definite mission in life. We have been entrusted by God with a concrete assignment so that each one of us can contribute our bit to the good of the world. The secret of a successful life lies in bringing out the best in us and utilizing it for the good of others.

The life of Dr. Tom Dooley is an example of a life dedicated to the cause of humanity. After high school, Tom decided to become a doctor, and so began the study of medicine. After his graduation, he served in South East Asia as a military doctor. It was while he

was in Vietnam that the course of his life changed radically. Moved by the sufferings of the refugees that kept pouring into Laos, he decided to give up his paying career in America to work among them. He stirred the interest of others in his project and inspired doctors and nurses to lend their services to the cause he had given himself up to. It was while doing this for the people who needed him most that he contracted the deadly disease of cancer. But the pain and thought of approaching death were not able to crush his spirit. He worked till his death in January 1961.

Life in the steaming jungles of Laos was hard and had very few consolations to offer. Yet in a letter to a high school student back in his home country, he spoke of the joy that comes from the life of dedication and service. He writes —"In this kind of work for anyone, anywhere, one can be just as happy as he wants to be. I want to be happy and make others happy and well. God has given me a special small talent to do this. I will use it according to His wishes".

It was because of this that his name is held in high esteem even to this day. Nothing could part him from his aim excepting his death.

To quote James Mason Brown: "The joy of living comes from immersion in something that we know bigger, better, more enduring and worthier than we are. People causes, ideas—these offer the only possible escape not merely from selfishness, but from the hungers of solitude and the sorrows of aimlessness."

Meera Viswanathan

RIDDLES

1. Which bus first went to America?
2. Why is the giraffe's neck so long?
3. In which pan can you not fry anything?

Answers on Page 26

Words in Words

By V. Shyam

In the following words, remove a letter and make a new word, without rearranging the remaining letters. Continue to remove letters till you can make no more words. For each new word give yourself a point and see how many points you get.

Example : Chair–hair, air (2 points)

1. smart
2. splint
3. stoop
4. planet
5. stolid
6. spinet
7. spiked
8. streamy
9. stoney
10. storey.

Answers on Page 15

He is the greatest artist who makes an art of his life—

Shri Govindabhai K. Raja

63/F, Napean Sea Road, "Suvas Apartments", 4th Floor, Bombay-400 006.

A New Look at CHRISTMAS

By Lalita Frazier

Lalita Frazier, a devotee of Swami Chinmayananda, explains the significance of Christmas.

IF you had been a shepherd in Jerusalem years ago, what a wondrous sight you would have seen one late night while still awake! It was that unusually bright star that caught your gaze for so long and would not allow one bit of sleep to cover your eyes. How easy it was to ignore the soft murmuring of sheep and even the nearby town's lights and chatterings were nothing to your eyes and ears —all attention was on the magnificent star. Did it only seem to move closer and closer almost touching a neighbouring hill? No, it was not mere imagination—the brilliant star did move! This was

the astonishing conclusion as you watched the star definitely beam its light directly over a stable—a small hut where cows were kept on cold nights such as this.

This was the same place where just hours before a man and wife, the lady heavy with child, came to rest for the night since the only inn in town was full to capacity. Mary, the expectant mother, had courageously and uncomplainingly travelled all day on a slow-moving donkey, which husband Joseph led. Although Joseph was a carpenter by trade and not likely to take long journeys especially with a pregnant wife, they had to set out for Jerusalem when the king of the land, Herod, demanded each subject to be registered for purposes of taxation. Even so they had recently to flee their home when this same king, wicked and power mad, heard it prophesied that a child would be born in his kingdom, who would be mightier than himself. Herod, in a fit of jealous possession of the throne, commanded that every male child in the kingdom, under the age of three years, be put to death. It was in this scene of political tyranny, social upheaval, and personal tragedy for so many that a child was born to Mary and Joseph in that very stable, on this same night that the shepherd could not sleep.

As soon as the child was born and wrapped in coarse blankets and placed on a bed made of the sweet smelling and soft hay, three kings arrived from afar carrying costly treasure which they offered as gifts to the child. They too had seen the star and their wise men had prophesied also that they should look for signs of the birth of a great leader and saviour of men. Very soon many of the shepherds approached and they too knelt in prayerful awe at the sight of the holy child. Without astrologers, without announcements, it was obvious to these simple folk that the wondrous child was an expression Divine. This birth of the child Jesus, who came as the embodiment of God's Love to uplift mankind, is celebrated as Christmas.

It is not the history of an individual man we are commemorating this day but it is God's message we are contemplating—it is HIS STORY! So when we say that Jesus was born in a stable we mean that God's love can only be "born" or come into expression in a simple place, a humble heart. And that even very aged and wise men came to recognize and worship this child means that thoughts (wise men) bow down (are silenced in reverence) before the pure and innocent (child-like) Spirit in man.

That we celebrate by lighting candles means that the light of understanding has come into the world because we can only see

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He who thinks and proclaims that he knows everything, seldom knows everything.

Dharm Sangeet Shringar
Opp: Ram Mandir, Gowaliguda, Hyderabad-500 012.

and know anything well when it is lighted. That we give gifts means that we offer the best of whatever we have to what we love, rich or poor (king or shepherd). It does not matter what we offer; it is with what heart we offer it that makes our gift acceptable. And Jesus Himself represents the best gift given to mankind which is God's comfort, peace, knowledge of right living and pure love.

By decorating trees, we mean that the whole of nature is made more beautiful by your presence, Lord. And by singing "Hark the Herald angels sing, glory to the new-born king"... King? Yes, He is a king but not in the material way that King Herod understood, but in the Spirit, this great son of Mankind would lead men from worldly sorrows to unearthly joys. How could Jesus do this if he was only the son of a poor carpenter? The kingdom was not meant to be in the outer world with a palace and lots of money to buy anything. What does a king do besides have money? He rules. And Jesus, being the expression of the Lord, had the capacity (which we all can have too) to rule his own mind—this made him a king on earth. Since he was always so loving and peaceful many people called him "the Prince of Peace".

Thus we see that just as any ritual done in a Temple, Mosque, Church or Gurdwara has a meaning to the actions, tells a story to remember, so too when any prophet or saviour comes into the world, His whole life is a drama, a Divine message. One important message that the birth celebration of Jesus gives to us is that if we make a place in the manger of our hearts where everyone is welcome, then will be born a great love and peace that we will be able to share with everyone—not just at Christmas, but always.

THANK YOU, GOD

Thank you for the world you have made,
And for the seas and rivers you have laid.

Thank you for the world so wide
Thank you for my friends on all sides.
Thank you for the mountains so green
Oh God! these make a beautiful scene.
Thank you for my eyes with which I can see
Thank you God for all you have done for me

By Mitali Sethi (12 *years*)

The Story of DATTATREYA'S BIRTH

By Br. Vishwa Chaitanya

Guru Dattatreya, an incarnation of the Brahma-Vishnu-Maheshwara Trinity is hailed in our Epics as an outstanding spiritual Master. Here is an interesting story of the events that led to his birth.

ONCE there lived a Brahmin on the outskirts of a dense forest. He had a wife who was absolutely faithful and pure to the core. This Brahmin, on account of the wrong deeds done in his past, had now become a victim of leprosy, a terrible disease. Frustrated, he began to go crazy, cursing his wife and everybody around.

The poor lady cheerfully accepted the situation and patiently dealt with her ailing husband. There was no limit to her forbearance. The leper-husband would shout at her for every gesture she would make.

Once the Brahmin went so far as to order that his wife should take him to a woman living on the other side of the forest. The lady, without any sign of protest, resolved to obey the order. Both of them set out one fine morning. The lady, trekking ahead cleared the way for her husband, removing the stones and thorns on the path across the forest.

At one point, on one side of the path was sitting the great Mandavya Maharshi in deep meditation, in utter oblivion of the world. The Brahmin who was walking in an unbalanced manner due to his ailment, knocked against the sitting sage. The Rishi opened his eyes that were blazing like fire. Infuriated by the impudence, he pronounced a curse upon the leper, who was now standing benumbed. The sage burst out : "Thou shalt perish with the sunrise."

The lady, moving a little ahead, stopped at this sound and turned around to see what was happening. She realized the gravity of the situation and decided to save her husband's life at any cost. She at once uttered a remedial curse "Let the sun not rise."

Remember, the latter is also a curse as effective as the former, for, both the pativrata and the Rishi are performers of penance in their own fields.

The day wore out and it was night. The hours rolled by. There was no sign of day-break, no sign of the sun rising up from the ocean or leaping over the eastern mountains. The night seemed unending. The Devas got alarmed as they sensed that the Cosmic Law was disturbed somewhere on account of something. It did not take much time for them to locate the trouble on the earth.

He who thinks that he is not fit to serve forgets to learn from the cows and the trees around—

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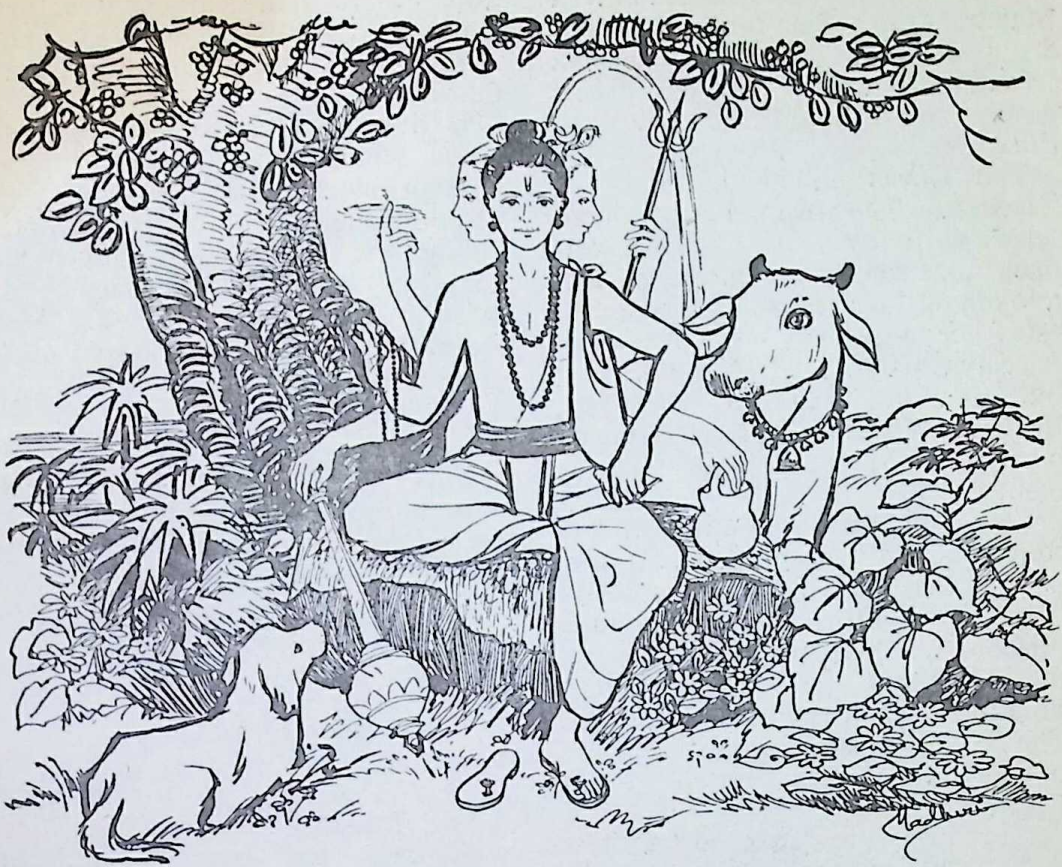


They held an emergency conference presided over by Indra, their leader. Indra, realizing fully the dimension of the problem, minced no words in stating that unless the Devas could get another pativrata of the same calibre to solve the problem for them, it would be impossible to get the sun to ever rise. And, without the sun, the world was doomed.

The Devas immediately set about finding another pativrata. Finally they were directed by a group of sages to a couple—Rishi Atthri and Anasuya, his consort. Anasuya was known for her devotion and loyalty to her husband. Besides, she was pure at heart, doing severe tapas along with her husband. Anasuya was approached by the Devas in all reverence. They told her their grievance and prayed for her kind intervention. She took pity on the world and assured them of her help.

Anasuya went up to the Brahmin lady and requested her to let the sun rise. "But I'll lose my husnand" was the polite reply of the lady. "No", assured Anasuya, "I shall at once revive him. Thereupon the Brahmin lady, by a counter — utterance made the sun rise. The sun

did rise and the curse of Mandavya Maharshi took effect too. The leper dropped dead. And now Anasuya swung into action. By her divine power, she brought him back to life.

The Devas hailed the glory of Anasuya. They were beside themselves with joy. The universe was back to order and harmony. As a token of their gratitude, they requested her to ask any boon she liked. Anasuya made full use of the offer by demanding that the Trimurties, Brahma—Vishnu—Maheshwara be born to her in one single embodiment.

The boon was granted. In due course, a divine child was born, who was already enlightened from birth. Obviously it was none other than Dattatreya. The sages, the Devas and other celestial beings sang in praise of the great Almighty. The Goddess of Earth shed tears of joy, having been blessed by this Divine Birth.

As the boy grew up, the darkness that pervaded the surface of the earth began to disappear. The world all over showed signs of appreciating Knowledge and Wisdom. Human life on earth became more and more harmonious and happy under the influence of right guidance by great men.

Thus this Avatar was mainly to enlighten the dark cells of the human heart that breed all sorts of evils. Naturally enough, the dawn of wisdom ushers in an atmosphere that is marked by all virtuousness. Therefore, He became the Great Guru.

Unlike other occasions of importance which have become mere passing pleasurable periods, we should celebrate Datta Jayanti, giving the utmost importance to acquiring and disseminating the Wisdom that saves mankind. And therefore, the occasion should concern students most.

This is an extract from a letter written by an American mother to her children, describing her impressions of India.

Tirunelveli
Sept. 4, 1979.

Dear Arlene & David,

NOW I am at the bottom most tip of India. 'Tirunelveli' which you can see by the map is very close to the Equator—therefore it is very hot compared to Seattle, but the people here had to learn a long time ago how to live comfortably, so now their houses have no windows at all, just iron bars bent into delicate patterns that allow even small birds to fly through, and every room has a fan overhead that spins out cooling air all day and

Contd. on Page 31

Desire is an expression of a sense of incompleteness, and happiness is a state of desirelessness—

Polyplastics Corporation
105-106, A-Z Ind. Estate, Ganpatrao Kadam Marg, Lower Parel, Bombay-13.

Swami Tapovan Maharaj

The Story of His Life

By M. Keshavan Unni Nair

All you dear children know who Swami Chinmayananda is. But how many of you know who His Guru was? Let me introduce you to Swami Tapovanam.

INDIA is rightly known as the Land of Saints. Our dear country has produced so many men of God for so many centuries. These great men of God have never tried to become famous by showing off their powers. Many of them were not even known outside the great Himalayas, where they lived a quiet life of happiness and peace. One such great Saint was Jagadguru Swami Tapovan Maharaj.

In the year 1886, in a small village near Alathur, Palghat in the state of Kerala, a little boy was born to Balammal and Sri Achuthan Nair. As the child grew, he proved to be an intelligent boy. But all his interest lay in the great stories of the Hindu Gods. He would spend hours with his eyes open in wonder as he listened to the heroic stories of the Puranas. In o rder to be able to read them all by himself, he soon became an expert at both English and Sanskrit. But he always thought that English was a hollow language compared to Sanskrit. When he was seventeen his father died. He became the head of the family. Though he was so deeply in love with God, he did not run away to become a 'Sanyasi'. He looked after his family till his younger brother became a lawyer, and was able to look after them.

By this time, Chippu Kutty Nair, as he was called, was a famous writer and speaker in his native tongue, Malayalam. He had finished reading all the big books on God and at last he was free to set out into the beautiful Himalayas. Like the Saint Queen Mira, Chippu Kutty loved God so much that he lived in a little hut, in the compound of his own house. Here he led a simple life, always praying and thinking. But he craved to be in the glorious Himalayas, where Mother Nature looks her best.

In 1920, when Chippu Kutty Nair was thirty four years old, he left home, to roam about as a simple monk (sanyasi). After going on three pilgrimages to visit all the temples of India, he decided to spend the rest of his life in the beautiful lap of Mother Nature at Uttarkashi high up in the Himalayas. From there he never came down to the plains. For the next 36 years, he remained mainly at his Kutiya. He would spend all his time either at Gangotri in the summer, watching

Mother Ganges rolling out majestically on her long journey to the ocean, or in Uttarkashi, at a little lower height, where he sat in deep meditation.

Among all the brainy saints of the Himalayas, Swami Tapovanam, as he was known after Sanyasa, was famous for his knowledge. He would spend hours arguing and discussing with the other monks. They all respected him for his thorough and deep learning. As he roamed from peak to peak, he was so carried away by the rich beauty of Nature, that he wrote long poems in Sanskrit.

He was a poet and a philosopher. Not only that, he was also a very kind human-being. Very often, while talking seriously to a Sanskrit pundit, on a very difficult topic, he would suddenly stop to enquire about some old lady's health, or to help some unhappy pilgrim. He was also fond of animals and always fed them before eating his own little 'bhiksha'.

Every year he visited all the big temples in the Himalayas like Badrinath, Kedarnath etc. It is said by some of the other saints who lived in his time, that when this noble soul asked his Guru for Sanyasa, the Mahatma said "Sanyasa need not be given to you. You are already a born Sanyasi". So pure was the simple life led by him.

One day as Swami Tapovanam was roaming in the Himalayas, he came upon a very beautiful scene. So he decided to sit down on a rock under a clump of trees and gaze at the waterfalls. Suddenly he heard stealthy footsteps creeping up behind him. He turned around and accosted a dark wild-looking bearded man. "What do you want?" the Swami asked calmly, not frightened by the knife in the robber's hand. He had come to steal from the Swami "I have nothing to give you", he said, laughing aloud. The robber was attracted by the serene holy face and continued to talk to him gently. Out of curiosity, he asked the Swami that if he had nothing but the clothes he wore, where was he going to eat his next meal? Once more the Swami smiled and said "Wherever God wills". The robber was so touched that he offered him four dry chapatis, half the lunch that he had with him. The Swami had won over one more heart.

Though he was a very kind person, he never tolerated useless people who did not like to study. When he taught his own disciples, he would tell them the difficult Truth of the holy books only once. That is why his true disciples like Swami Chinmayananda are so thorough! If the disciples missed their lessons, he never repeated. He shouted at them and sent them away. He did not care to get a good name as a teacher. If the people who came to him were not ready to learn quickly, he stopped teaching them. So it became a competition among the students to be alert and not to miss any teaching.

He always tested his students to find out if they were sincere. Once somebody offered him a basketful of sweet "laddoos". The

young disciples were waiting for him to give some to them. The great master knew it. He kept the basket inside his Kutiya. Two days passed. Then one more day. Some of the young disciples got furious. They thought that the Swami was eating them alone. Some of them even left him. On the fourth day, he called young Chinmaya and told him to bring the unopened basket out of his hut. Some of the disciples thought, "at least now, we shall taste the laddoos". But Swamiji asked Chinmaya to throw the whole box into the Ganga. He taught them not to be greedy about such little things as "laddoos".

Swamiji was never scared of Death. He knew that only the body died, the soul lives on. He was after all, not the body. He always laughed when his disciples and devotees asked him to take treatment for his failing health. "Is there a medicine which will keep me alive forever?" he would ask, laughing. His followers came from all over the Himalayas to ask him and even beg him to take medicines. He would tell them, "suppose there is an old man, who has come to see you. He sees that you are busy, so he waits outside the door, with patience. You cannot refuse to see such a nice old man. So, you will apologise and invite him inside. For the last sixty-eight years, this old man Yama has been waiting for me. How can I be rude to him and ask him to go away? When he comes to meet me, I shall call him in and be nice to him."

All his devotees were sad when in 1956, at the ripe age of seventy, he took Samadhi, and left his body.

What we children can learn from this great man's life is what our dear Swamiji has learnt: to be a lover of Nature; to learn all the necessary languages very well; to read all our Puranic stories and try to become like their heroes; and to be kind to all living beings, animal or human. Most important of all, even if you have studied all these things, don't show off, lead a humble, simple, pure life, wherever you may be.

Answers to Words in Words

1. smart :— mart, art (2 points)
2. splint :— split, spit, pit, it (4 points)
3. stoop :— stop, top, to (3 points)
4. planet :— plant, pant, ant, an, a (5 points)
5. stolid :— solid, slid, lid (3 points)
6. spinet :— spine, pine, pin, in (4 points)
7. spiked :— spike, pike, pie (3 points)
8. streamy :—stream, steam, team, tea (4 points)
9. stoney :— stone, tone, ton, on (4 points)
10. storey :— store, tore, ore, or (4 points)

Total Points :— 36

The Ancestral Balance

A PANCHATANTRA FABLE

Retold by Lalogue Postvala

In a certain town lived a wealthy merchant. His name was Naduk. Gay at heart, he spent his time feasting, gambling, and drinking. Both his parents having died when he was in his teens, he had no one to advise and check him.

Engrossed in merry-making, he started neglecting his business. He lost his beautiful house in gambling. His shop became an empty shell. Only the big ancestral weighing balance remained a sad reminder of a once flourishing business. Too late, he repented his misbehaviour.

Ashamed of being a pauper in a city where he had moved around like a king, he decided to go to foreign lands to make money.

On the day of his departure, Naduk took the weighing scales to his friend, merchant Lakshman's house. He wistfully said, "Dost Lakshman, these scales can weigh up to a thousand kilos. Please advance me some money against them."

Lakshman had always coveted the huge scales. He immediately loaned ten gold coins to Naduk. Lakshman was very happy with the deal. He did not expect Naduk to return.

For two years Naduk travelled wherever he could find business. He earned a lot of money by his hard work. Finally, he returned to his native land, a rich man.

When he met Lakshman, be said, "Dear friend, I'm very happy to see you again. Take your gold coins and release my scales."

Lakshman said, "Naduk, sorry, I can't return your balance. It has been eaten up by mice."

To this Naduk replied, "Lakshman you're not to be blamed if it has been eaten by mice. Such is life. There is nothing permanent in this world."

He added, "See, I'm going to the river for a bath. Can your son Daulat come with me to carry my bathing things?"

Since Lakshman was feeling guilty at having cheated Naduk, he promptly called his son. "Daulat, this is Uncle Naduk. He's going to the river to bathe. Go with him and carry his bathing things."

Daulat was only too happy to oblige. He disliked being tied down to his desk. A walk to the river held so many possibilities. Perhaps, he thought, he too might get a chance to swim.

However, when they reached the river, Naduk pushed Daulat into an empty cave, blocked the entrance with a great rock, and returned to Lakshman's house.

When Lakshman asked, "Naduk where is my son?" Naduk answered, "My good Lakshman, a hawk carried him off from the river bank."

"Oh! You liar," cried Lakshman in anguish. "How could a hawk possibly carry a big boy like Daulat?"

"But", retorted Naduk, "the mice could eat an iron balance! Give me my balance if you want your son."

Instead of returning the scales, Lakshman dragged Naduk to the palace gates and called upon the magistrates to intervene.

"Help, Sires, Help! A ghastly deed! This man has kidnapped my only son."

The magistrates admonished Naduk and ordered him to release the son of Lakshman.

Naduk pleaded, "What am I to do sires, if mice can eat a thousand kilo scales, surely a hawk can easily carry off an elephant? A boy is a trifling weight."

"What are you talking about?" they queried.

Naduk then related tne story of his ancestral balance. They laughed and had the weighing scales and the boy restored to their respective owners.

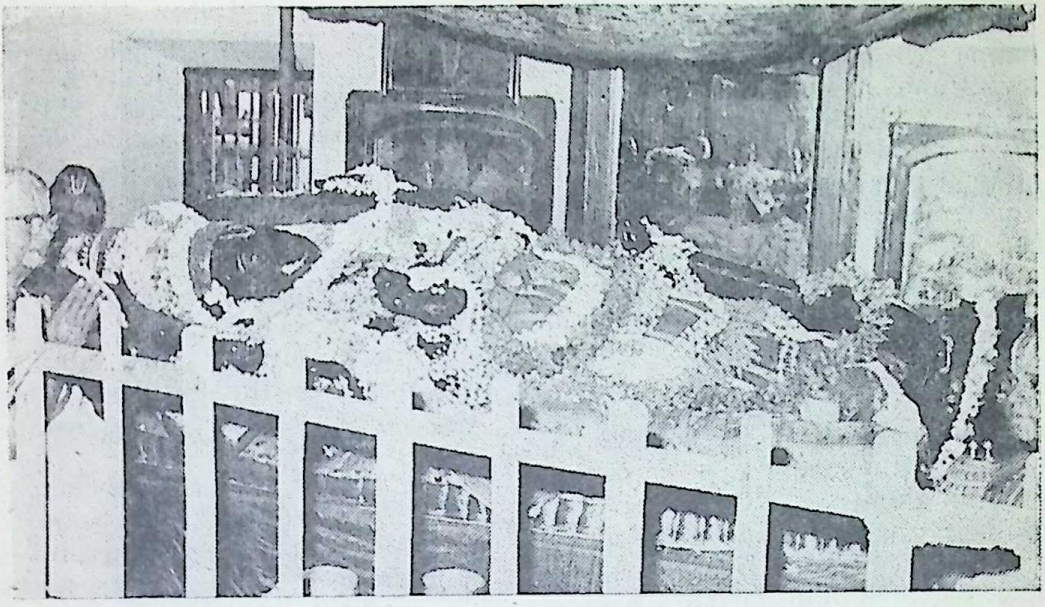
Capital, whether material or spiritual, is saved labour —

Jolly & Maker

Maker Bhavan No. 2, New Marine Lines, Bombay-400 020.

BHARAT DARSHAN
Athigiri Varadar

By Dr. R. Vajreswari



Athigiri Varadar of Kanchi
Photo : Courtesy "The Hindu" Madras.

WE are visiting 'Kanchi', a great temple-city near Madras. It was the capital of the Pallavas who ruled the southern region from the fifth to the seventh centuries. There are a number of big and small temples and a few of them are very famous.

We are visiting a great Vishnu shrine where a notable event has taken place recently. Once in 42 years, the image of Lord Varadaraja (Bestower of Boons) is taken out of the stone mantapa in the Pushkarani tank. This image, we learn, has been carved out of a fig tree. Looking at the image which looks just like a stone image, we can understand that it must have been a fossilised fig tree, that had been chosen by the sculptor. Lord Varadaraja, who is kept in a reclining posture in the tank, is kept in the same posture in the Vasantha Mantapa of the shrine. For 48 days, special pujas are offered. Thousands of devotees flock to have a glimpse of the Lord whom, many of them can see, only once in their life time. It was in 1937 that the Lord first gave Darshan and later

in 1979, for the devotees in the twentieth century.

What is the explanation offered for this unique event? Once, Brahma, the Creator suffered from loss of memory. Often we fall a victim to this disease. But imagine the great tragedies that would happen because of the Creator's forgetfulness! He was advised to do a yaga and invoke the blessings of Lord Varadaraja in the small hillock in the forest of fig trees. That place was called Athi-giri (fig hillock). The Lord came out of the Yaga Kunda and cured Brahma of his illness. Varadaraja (Bestower of Boons) has been blessing devotees, ever since.

But why did the Lord of Athigiri choose to remain in the Pushkarani tank? We have an interesting account about this. Once the temple priest had a dream in which the Lord told him "Dear devotee, since coming out of the Yaga Kunda, I am suffering from a burning sensation all over the body. You must use hundreds of pots of water for my abishakam (bathing of the Lord), three times a day". The obedient priest carried out the command of the Lord. In course of time, he found it very arduous to carry hundreds of pots of water up the hillock. He prayed to the Lord for relief. The gracious deity gave the following direction in a dream. "Place me in a reclining pose in the stone mantap within the Pushkarani tank so that I am immersed in water always. Once in 42 years, I could be brought out for Darshan, for forty eight days". The priest's problem of finding a deity for everyday worship was also solved by the Lord.

"Fifteen miles from this place is a hillock. You will find a deity on that hillock—let that deity be brought over and installed in my place". The next day, led by the priest, the devotees went to the hillock at 'Sivaram', a small village. They found a strikingly similar image of Lord Varadaraja and brought him to Kanchi. With the prescribed religious rites, the Lord was placed in the Pushkarani tank and the new image was installed in the temple.

Every year, the utsavamurti of the temple is taken to Sivaram for a one-day festival. Thousands of devotees from nearby places assemble joyously to welcome the Lord on his home coming!

The majestic Lord is eight feet tall and is in a standing posture, with four hands. The Sanku (conch) and Chakra (discus) adorn the two hands. The third hand is in 'Varada' mudra (boon bestowing) and the fourth pointing to his feet. The beauty of the Lord is breathtaking particularly when adorned with the golden crown and costly and elaborate jewels. The utsava deity is even more attractive. The

Continued on Page 26

Brush aside pride and vanity and permit God to work in and through you—
Vijay Corporation
65, Ideal Ind. Estate, Mathuradas Mills Compound,
Lower Parel, Bombay-400 013.

A. No.....

CRICKET

HOW GOOD IS INDIA ?

Hello Sportslovers!

IF cricket contests were like a mathematical equation : A=B, B=C, therefore A=C, it would have been easier to predict how India would fare against Pakistan.

In the last year, since India lost zero-two to Pakistan, Pakistan has drawn the series one-all with Australia, while India seems almost hundred percent sure of winning her first-ever rubber against Australia. I am writing this while the sixth and final Test against Australia, is still on at Bombay's Wankhede Stadium.

Unfortunately, cricket does not work out like a mathematical equation. Predictions such as who will win—India or Pakistan— become meaningless in a game which can fluctuate from hour to hour; sometimes even from ball to ball.

By the time you read this piece, the India-Pakistan series will be on in full swing. Let's wait for next month to have an account of the Tests as they progress.

In this article, let us assess the strengths and weaknesses of the current Indian team as compared to the Indian side Bishen Singh Bedi took over to Pakistan, last year.

There is no doubt that Indian cricket has gained tremendously since the disaster last winter in Pakistan.

Kapil Dev was a raw youngster when he went to Pakistan. Today, he is a regular member of the Indian side, and his volatile cricket has captured the hearts of Indians. This very useful all-rounder, is probably second only to Gavaskar as a household name. Yashpal Sharma, who also went to Pakistan as an untried youngster, is another to have seized his chances to establish himself in the batting order. His consistency and ability have grown with almost every Test, and his presence at number five has taken considerable pressure off the shoulders of Gavaskar and Viswanath. Higher up, Chauhan has proved to be a reliable opening partner for Gavaskar—making up, by tenacity and determination, the flaws in his technique. Vengsarkar too, has realised his potential, and become a regular number three for India—a position vacant since Wadekar's retirement.

The batting, with Kirmani, Kapil Dev and Ghavri to follow, stretches almost to the end and can by no means be considered a push-over to even the strongest bowling teams.

Unfortunately, India's bowling has not kept pace with its batting. The attack is still mostly in the hands of Kapil Dev. Ghavri is quite a bit short of being the ideal opening bowler to support Kapil. The two new spinners, Doshi and Yadav, will really have to prove against Pakistan-one of the world's strongest batting sides—that their successes against Australia were

more than a flash in the pan.

Luckily for India, the dropping of Sarfraz Nawaz has caused a void in Pakistan's bowling attack which will revolve around and rely almost solely on Imran Khan—timed by a computer as the world's third fastest bowler.

I will make only one prediction. The series will be dominated by batsmen of both sides. Gavaskar and Zaheer Abbas look likely to score the maximum runs and break the most records. It will be a delight for statisticians to compile the runs scored by two of the most prolific scorers of recent times.

—Bharat Savur

Answers to Riddles

1. Columbus
2. Because its head is far from its body.
3. Japan.

By R. Ramesh

Continued from page 24

golden crown of this Lord exactly fits the Lord of Athigiri and adorns him for forty-eight days!

Through the centuries, kings have made generous endowments to the temple. To-day the temple stands in a twenty-three acre area, with high walls in the outer compound. During Muslim invasions of the city, the people took refuge in the temple as it served as a fortress.

The sculptural glories of the 100 pillared hall are many. To mention one, the stone-chains with ornamental rings are carved out of a single stone and are to be found in the four corners of this mantap.

Many Vaishnava saints have sung the glory of Lord Varadaraja in moving poems. Of the annual festivals of the temple, in addition to the visit to Sivaram, 'Garuda Seva'—Darshan of the Lord on Garuda and Ratha utsava (car festival) are famous. Thousands of devotees participate in these festivals. As for the 48 days of Darshan of Lord Athigiri, lakhs of devotees had thronged the temple premises to have a glimpse.

Bindu Venugopal

Born : 24th April 1972
Joined the Lotus feet : 20th Mar. 1979.

"Words cannot fathom the sorrow in our hearts. Tears cannot heal the wound of your loss".

In sorrow
Your beloved Papa and Mummy and little sister Deepti whom you have not seen.

RAMAYANA
Ayodhya's Affectionate Send-Off

By Anantha Narayanan

Gratefully accepting the very generous hospitality and blessing the king and his entourage, Viswamitra said: "Oh, Tiger amongst kings, what you have said is indeed truly worthy of you alone, who are the descendant of the noble Ikshvaku race! Further, how could it be otherwise when you have the good fortune of being blessed by the illustrious Sage Vasishta, your Guru?

"Hence, O King, prove true to your promise and fulfil my resolve. I am engaged in the conduct of a yagna for the welfare of the world. Two powerful Rakshasas, named Maricha and Subhahu, with others who are capable of taking any form, prevent the performance of the yagna by throwing flesh and blood, thus defiling the holy altar. I do not wish to waste my tapas by losing my temper and cursing them.

"It is the duty of noble Kshatriyas like you to protect the Rishis and such holy yagnas. Hence, I have come urgently to seek the help of your eldest and heroic son, Sri Rama, who is possessed of true prowess! Sri Rama is capable of killing the Rakshasas by his own glory. Further, under my loving care and with my boons and blessings, his fame will spread far and wide in the world. Sri Rama alone can destroy the demons."

Watching Dasaratha's expected reaction of utter dismay, Viswamitra reassured him:

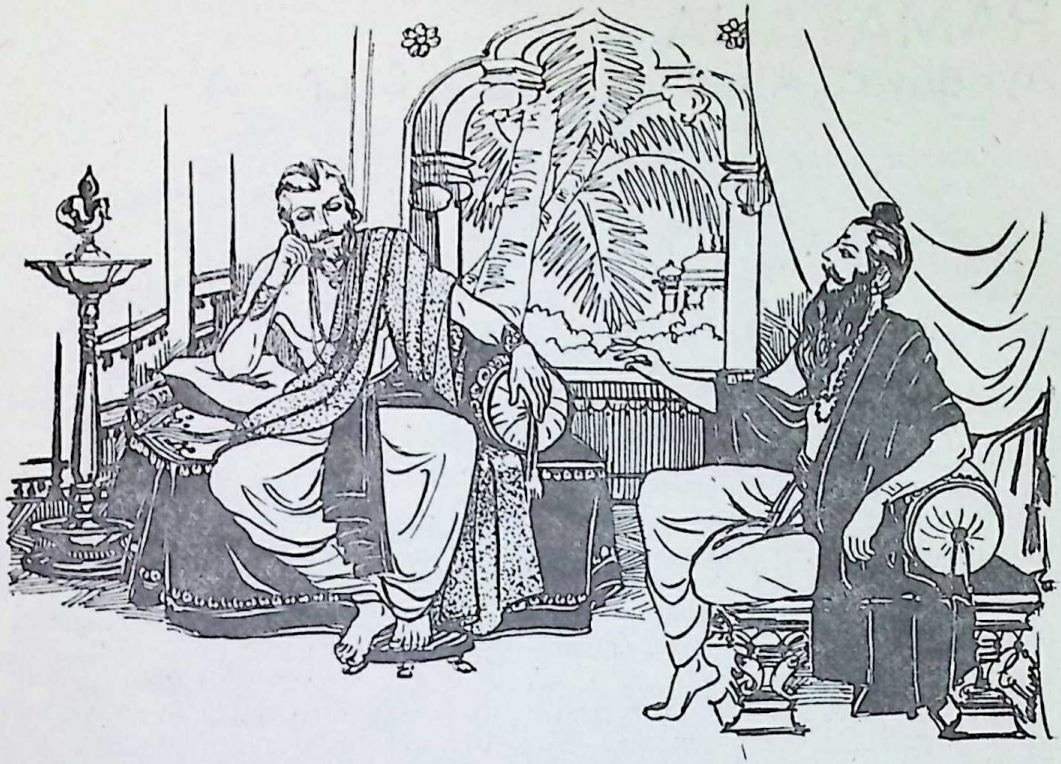
"You should not allow your fatherly affection to stand in the way of the yagna's success and Sri Rama's future. For,

अहं वेद्मि महात्मानं रामं सत्यपराक्रमम् ।
वसिष्ठोपि महातेजा : ये चेमे तपसिस्थिता : ॥

I know the high souled Rama as possessed of unfailing prowess. The highly glorious Sage Vasishta and those who are rooted in tapas here also know him thus.

Therefore, true to your promise, be pleased to hand over your beloved lotus—eyed son Rama to me for only ten days and nights in the interest of my yagna. Do not give room to grief".

Hearing this totally unexpected demand of Viswamitra, which came as a bolt from the blue, King Dasaratha fainted! Recovering himself, he shivered with fear, grief and anxiety. Caught between his earlier promise to the sage and his natural unwillingness to part with his darling Rama, Dasaratha pleaded to Viswamitra in a choking voice: "My lotus-eyed Rama is not even 16 years old. I do not think he is capable of meeting the Rakshasas. Instead, I shall personally lead my mighty army and fight the Rakshasas and protect the yagna. You should not take away my Rama. The Rakshasas are



powerful and treacherous and my Rama is but a child! He is untrained,not equipped with missiles nor skilled in warfare! O Tiger among Sages, separated from my Rama, I cannot live even for an hour. Therefore, you should not take away my Rama.

"With great difficulty is this sweet Rama born to me as a divine blessing at this old age. Of the four sons, my total affection is on the eldest, Rama, who is an embodiment of Dharma. Hence you ought not to take away my beloved Rama".

Seeing Viswamitra unmoved, the King continued : "If , however, you still insist on Rama, please take me along with him together with my entire army. Oh! Holy Kausika, kindly tell me who are these Rakshasas and what is their strength so that I may prepare to meet them". Encouraged by these words, Viswamitra said: "There is a very powerful Rakshasa King called Ravana, a descendant of Sage Pulastya who was one of the sons of Lord Brahma. Ravana is the son of Sage Visravas (son of Pulastya) and a cousin brother of Kubera.

"By severe tapas, he has obtained a boon from Lord Brahma that he will not be killed by anyone other than humans. Backed by this assurance, the arrogant and wicked Ravana, along with other strong Rakshasa s, is oppressing all the three worlds. Whenever he does not

personally attack, the mighty Rakshasas Maricha and Subhahu are sent by him to obstruct the yagnas and harass the Rishis".

When King Dasaratha heard that the source of the trouble was the Mighty Ravana, he decided not to part with Sri Rama at any cost. Trembling with fear, he pleaded: "Even I, with my army, will not be able to stand before the powerful and evil-minded Ravana! O Sir, regarding you as a god worthy of adoration, knowing what is right, kindly excuse me and my darling son for our inability to carry out your request. How can mere men face the mighty Ravana when even the Gods and Demons tremble before him? Therefore, O Holy Sage, I shall not part with my darling son With my relations and army I shall, however, try to meet the two Rakshasas in battle or I shall seek your kind pardon for not being able to render you, the promised help."

To be Continued

UTTAM BALA VIHAR CELEBRATES GANAPATI

Tiny tots in the play Akbar and Birbal

On 26th August 1979, the Uttam Bala Vihar children sang devotional songs and bhajans on the occasion of Ganesh Chaturthi. The function was inaugurated by the Corporation Councillor, Mrs. Parvati Parihar.

The same evening, children presented a two hour variety entertainment programme including songs, dances and skits to an enthralled audience. To the delight of everybody, the tiny tots 3-6 years staged Akbar and Birbal.

The Mind—A Flow of Thoughts

HERE is a letter that a young devotee has written to her parents about what she understood from Swamiji's talk. Swamiji spoke at Humboldt, California at a camp held last year.

Dear Mom and Dad,

I would like to tell you about what I learnt at Swamiji's talk.

First he explained how you need to have an instruction booklet to run the body and the books are the Bible, the Geeta and the Koran. You need to train your mind to achieve your goal in your life. You must concentrate and keep your body where your mind is.

What is the mind? The mind is the flow of thoughts. As the thoughts, so the mind; as the mind, so the man. If the thoughts are good, the mind is good; if the mind is good, the man is good. The way to train your mind is by changing the quantity (how many thoughts flow through the mind), quality (what kind of thoughts, preferably good, happy ones) and direction (which way your thoughts are going; are they going to keep on going on the same idea like they should or are the going to jump from one thing to another and leave things unfinished?)

If you become angry at someone, try to think of God and the God in them and how He helps us live our life. At night just before you go to sleep, say a prayer of thanks to God that you are alive and well, and also for His protection through the night. Say a prayer in the morning too.

Love,
Arlene.

(Contd. from Page 12)

all night. We never sleep with any blanket.

During the daytime, we meet for classes under a roof made of wove palm tree branches –there are no walls so that the breeze can again come in. We sit on the floor on mats made of dried grass, and there is always the sound of birds, especially crows (hoarsely calling) and a very fresh smell of earth especially after the rain.

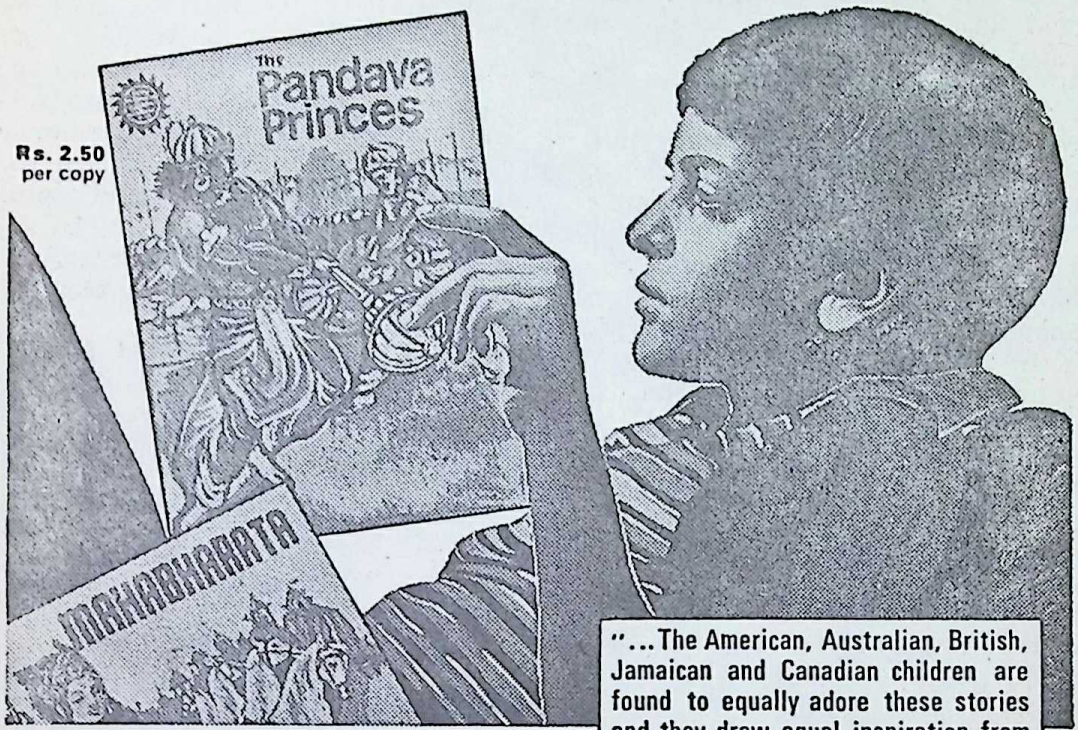
I'm eating all that good Indian food that I like, only now it's eaten from a banana leaf which is about twice as big as a paper plate. People come around while we sit on mats on the floor and each serves a dab of this-some rice, some vegetable, some yoghurt, fruit & nuts, some rasam (soup), and always some type of delicious sweet.

The life all around is so much like living on a farm only without any fences. Cows, buffalo, pigs, chickens, donkeys, dogs, chipmunks, snails and lizards run about. You can see a pig in the ditch right beside the roadway, or a cow at the entrance to the school door. Oh, yes, there are goats too, whole goat families that run together beneath the banana trees. The atmosphere is one of harmony and peace—man, animal and earth living quietly together.

All my love,
Lalita.

"I play a lot, I do my homework and in my spare time read AMAR CHITRA KATHA — very exciting stories"

USP/ACK-3



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